

## **90° Anniversario del Pontificio Istituto Biblico**

**6 – 7 – 8 Maggio 1999**

I giorni 6, 7 e 8 Maggio del corrente anno fu celebrato il 90° anniversario della fondazione del Pontificio Istituto Biblico, eretto dal Papa S. Pio X con la lettera apostolica «Vinea Electa» del 7 maggio 1909. La celebrazione voleva associarsi ai diversi momenti commemorativi nella vicinanza del grande giubileo del 2000.

I tre giorni furono dedicati a sessioni di studio tenutesi nell'Aula Magna della Pontificia Università San Tommaso d'Aquino a Roma.

Ogni seduta fu presieduta da una personalità accademica ed ecclesiastica, quasi tutti ex alunni dell'Istituto Biblico: Antoine Audo, S.J., Vescovo di Aleppo, Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya, Arcivescovo di Kisangani, Francesco Marchisano, Arcivescovo tit. di Populonia, Presidente della Pontificia Commissione per i Beni Culturali della Chiesa; Carlo Maria Martini, S.J., Cardinale Arcivescovo di Milano, e Giuseppe Pittau, S.J., arcivescovo tit. di Castro di Sardegna, Segretario della Congregazione per l'Educazione Cattolica, in rappresentanza del Prefetto della stessa Congregazione, il Cardinale Pio Laghi.

La messa di ringraziamento nella Chiesa di Sant'Ignazio, l'8 maggio, fu presieduta da Jorge Mejía, Arcivescovo tit. di Apollonia, Archivista e Bibliotecario di S.R.C.

I Professori invitati a tenere le conferenze erano anche per lo più ex alunni dell'Istituto Biblico, da diversi centri accademici del mondo, e ciascuno di essi particolarmente competente nel campo della sua specialità: Mario Liverani (La Sapienza, Roma), Hermann Spieckermann (Hamburg, poi Göttingen), Joseph Fitzmyer, S.J. (Washington), Florentino García Martínez (Groningen), Martin McNamara, MCS (Dublin), John Meier (Notre Dame, IN), Paul Beauchamp, S.J. (Paris), Norbert Lohfink, S.J. (Frankfurt), Romano Penna (Università Lateranense, Roma), Giacomo Martina, S.J. (Università Gregoriana, Roma).

Vittorio Fusco, Vescovo di Nardò-Gallipoli, uno dei relatori invitati, non poté leggere la sua conferenza, essendo in quei giorni ricoverato a causa di un male inguaribile, che lo ha portato alla sua prematura morte poche settimane dopo.

Non essendo prevista una pubblicazione d'insieme di tutti questi importanti contributi, *Biblica* chiese ai relatori di scrivere un articolo per la rivista sulla base della conferenza tenuta. In questo numero siamo lieti di pubblicare due di essi, sperando di offrirne altri nel primo e secondo numero dell'anno 2000.

Il comitato di redazione di *Biblica*

## **The Present State of the 'Third Quest' for the Historical Jesus: Loss and Gain<sup>(1)</sup>**

The so-called third quest for the historical Jesus, which traces its origins from work done by scholars like E.P. Sanders in the mid-1980s, has been a source of controversy since its inception. The most controversial of all its manifestations has been the group known as the Jesus Seminar, based in Sonoma, California<sup>(2)</sup>, and co-chaired by Dr. John Dominic Crossan and Dr. Robert W. Funk<sup>(3)</sup>. The Seminar in general and Crossan in particular have championed a picture of Jesus as a Jewish-peasant equivalent of a wandering Cynic

<sup>(1)</sup> As part of the celebration of the ninetieth anniversary of the founding of the Pontifical Biblical Institute (May 6-8, 1999), I was invited to address the assembled scholars and students on the present state of the so-called third quest for the historical Jesus, particularly in the English-speaking world, and most particularly in the United States. Consequently, I have restricted discussion of the literature largely to works written recently by English-speaking scholars. This decision arose from the purely utilitarian goal of giving this essay a necessary focus and delimitation. No slight is intended toward the many important scholars writing in other languages. For recent full-length German contributions that are now happily available in English, see J. GNILKA, *Jesus of Nazareth. Message and History* (Peabody, MA 1997; German original 1993); J. BECKER, *Jesus of Nazareth* (New York – Berlin, 1998; German original 1996); G. THEISSEN – A. MERZ, *The Historical Jesus* (Minneapolis 1998; German original 1996).

I wish to dedicate this article to all the Jesuit professors, living or deceased, whose lectures, notes, and books at the Gregorian University and the Biblical Institute guided me from my first steps in theological studies up to my doctoral thesis in Matthew's Gospel. Their devoted lives of scholarship were and are a shining example to their students of how a scholar should live as a believer and a believer should work as a scholar.

<sup>(2)</sup> Publications reflecting the work of the Jesus Seminar include R.W. FUNK – B. SCOTT – J.R. BUTTS, *The Parables of Jesus. Red Letter Edition* (Sonoma CA, 1988); R.W. FUNK – R.W. HOOVER, *The Five Gospels* (New York 1993); R.W. FUNK and the Jesus Seminar, *The Acts of Jesus* (San Francisco 1998).

<sup>(3)</sup> Examples of book-length expositions by the prolific Crossan include *The Historical Jesus. The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco 1991); *Jesus. A Revolutionary Biography* (San Francisco 1994); *Who Killed Jesus?* (San Francisco 1995); *The Birth of Christianity* (San Francisco 1998). Funk's work is summarized in *Honest to Jesus* (San Francisco 1996).

philosopher<sup>(4)</sup>. Jesus is depicted by Crossan as a social revolutionary opposed to the powers that be, be those powers the priestly hierarchy in the Jerusalem temple or the larger patron-client network in the Roman Empire. An egalitarian feminist, Jesus sought to subvert the hierarchical structures of his day by welcoming one and all to table fellowship and by practicing magic as an alternative to the temple cult. The Seminar tends to deny any future-eschatological element in Jesus' preaching of the kingdom. With future eschatology excluded, Jesus is seen to be calling his audience to open their eyes to the ever-present kingdom of God available to all in their human experience. The vaguely gnostic tone of this kerygma is not unrelated to the Seminar's interest in the Coptic *Gospel of Thomas*.

In fairness, it should be noted that not all members of the Jesus Seminar share these views, and that some members are guided in their research by intense pastoral concerns. For instance, Dr. Marcus Borg, a distinguished member of the Seminar, seeks by his work to help lapsed Christians rediscover Jesus as a meaningful religious figure — a desire reflected in the title of his book *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*<sup>(5)</sup>. Still, the Jesus Seminar as a whole has faced severe criticism for its methods and conclusions. Both the Cynic and the gnostic coloration of its portrait of Jesus are questionable on the grounds of dating of sources and historical context, and the wholesale elimination of future eschatology from Jesus' message flies in the face of its widespread attestation in many different gospel sources and literary forms. Despite the Seminar's protestations to the contrary, it has not avoided the temptation of projecting a modern American agenda onto a first-century Palestinian Jew<sup>(6)</sup>. It is no wonder, then, that some Catholic scholars in the

(4) A major source of such an approach is the work of F.G. DOWNING, *Christ and the Cynics* (JSOT Manuals 4; Sheffield 1988); id., *Cynics and Christian Origins* (Edinburgh 1992). For a critique of the approach, see H.D. BETZ, "Jesus and the Cynics: Survey and Analysis of a Hypothesis", *JR* 74 (1994) 453-475; P.R. EDDY, "Jesus as Diogenes? Reflections on the Cynic Jesus Thesis", *JBL* 115 (1996) 449-469; for replies, see D. SEELEY, "Jesus and the Cynics Revisited", *JBL* 116 (1997) 704-712; F.G. DOWNING, "Deeper Reflections on the Jewish Cynic Jesus", *JBL* 117 (1998) 97-104. Besides Crossan, scholars associated with the "Cynic thesis" include B. Mack and L. Vaage.

(5) See, e.g., M.J. BORG, *Jesus. A New Vision* (San Francisco 1987); id., *Jesus in Contemporary Scholarship* (Valley Forge, PA 1994); id., *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time* (San Francisco 1994).

(6) For a detailed survey of the work of Funk, Crossan, Borg, the Jesus



United States, such as Luke Timothy Johnson, have questioned the thrust not only of the Jesus Seminar but also of the third quest in general<sup>(7)</sup>. The paradox here is that some Catholic critics have adopted a new version of the once-scandalously skeptical position of Rudolf Bultmann: the quest for the historical Jesus is both historically impossible and theologically illegitimate<sup>(8)</sup>.

Amid the thrust and parry of mutually exclusive positions, often presented in sensationalistic fashion in the American media, one might well ask: has anything positive emerged from the third quest, or has the whole movement of the last decade been a total fiasco and loss, as some conservative Catholics have claimed? It is the contention of this article that, despite the questionable use of the media to popularize highly dubious theses, and despite the consequent loss of academic credibility on the part of some scholars, seven notable gains for serious research have been achieved by the third quest.

### I. The Ecumenical and International Dimension

A first gain has been the truly ecumenical and inter-faith nature of the present scholarly dialogue on the historical Jesus. To a large degree, the first two quests were the work of German Protestants. This is not said to denigrate the contributions of great scholars of the past, but inevitably these two quests were colored by and mostly restricted to the theological concerns of Protestant Germany in the late 19th and early-to-mid-20th centuries. The wide spectrum of scholars, Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and agnostic, who have participated in the third quest not only in the United States but also in Canada, Britain, Germany, and elsewhere has given an

---

Seminar in general, and other participants in the third quest (including the present writer) that seeks to be eminently fair to all parties, see M.A. POWELL, *Jesus as a Figure in History* (Louisville 1998).

(<sup>7</sup>) L.T. JOHNSON, *The Real Jesus* (San Francisco 1996); id., *Living Jesus* (San Francisco 1999); cf. R. BULTMANN, *Das Verhältnis der urchristlichen Christusbotschaft zum historischen Jesus* (Heidelberg <sup>3</sup>1962).

(<sup>8</sup>) Interestingly, seeking refuge in Bultmann's approach has not been the usual solution employed recently by most conservative and middle-of-the-road Protestant scholars; see, e.g., G.R. BEASLEY-MURRAY, *Jesus and the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids 1986); B. WITHERINGTON, III, *Jesus the Sage* (Minneapolis 1994); C.A. EVANS, *Jesus and His Contemporaries* (AGJU 25; Leiden 1995); C. L. BLOMBERG, *Jesus and the Gospels* (Nashville 1997); D.C. ALLISON, *Jesus of Nazareth. Millenarian Prophet* (Minneapolis 1998).

international and inter-confessional breadth to the third quest that the former two lacked. To take but a few examples, Ben Witherington, who has stressed the role of Jesus as wisdom teacher, is a conservative Methodist<sup>(9)</sup>; E.P. Sanders, in a sense the person who launched the third quest, comes from a Methodist background and might best be described as a post-liberal Protestant (though a Texan, he taught for many years in Canada and England)<sup>(10)</sup>; Robert Funk, the founder of the Jesus Seminar, comes out of the Disciples of Christ tradition; N.T. Wright, a perennial opponent of the Jesus Seminar, is an Anglican and the Dean of Lichfield cathedral<sup>(11)</sup>; and writers of such diverse views as John Dominic Crossan, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza<sup>(12)</sup>, and myself come from Roman Catholic backgrounds. To this can be added the valuable contributions — indeed, the decades-old impetus — of Jewish scholars such as Geza Vermes of Oxford and more recently Paula Fredriksen of Boston University<sup>(13)</sup>.

At the beginning of Volume One of my multi-volume study, *A Marginal Jew*, I conjured up the fantasy of an “unpapal conclave”, a committee made up of a Catholic, a Protestant, a Jew, and an agnostic, sober historians all, who were locked up in the bowels of the Harvard Divinity School library, put on a spartan diet, and not allowed to emerge until they had hammered out a consensus document on who Jesus of Nazareth was and what he intended in his own time and place<sup>(14)</sup>. While not intended literally — though some unfortunately took it that way — this unpapal conclave was meant to symbolize in graphic fashion the kind of international and inter-faith cooperation on a central and sensitive religious topic that would have been inconceivable not too many decades ago.

<sup>(9)</sup> B. WITHERINGTON, III, *The Christology of Jesus* (Minneapolis 1990); id., *Jesus the Sage* (Minneapolis 1994); id., *The Jesus Quest* (Downers Grove, IL 1995).

<sup>(10)</sup> E.P. SANDERS, *Jesus and Judaism* (Philadelphia 1985); *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (London 1993).

<sup>(11)</sup> N.T. WRIGHT, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis 1996).

<sup>(12)</sup> E. SCHÜSSLER FIORENZA, *In Memory of Her* (New York 1987); id., *Jesus. Miriam's Child and Sophia's Prophet* (New York 1994).

<sup>(13)</sup> G. VERMES, *Jesus the Jew* (Philadelphia 1973); id., *Jesus and the World of Judaism* (Philadelphia 1983); id., *The Religion of Jesus the Jew* (Minneapolis 1993); P. FREDRIKSEN, *From Jesus to Christ* (New Haven – London 1988).

<sup>(14)</sup> J.P. MEIER, *A Marginal Jew. Rethinking the Historical Jesus* (Anchor Bible Reference Library; 2 vols.; New York 1991, 1994) I, 1-2.

Indeed, in the face of regularly recurring announcements of the demise of the historical-critical method, it should be pointed out that it is precisely historical criticism that has made this dialogue possible across confessional borders by creating a level playing field of research with agreed-upon rules for the procedures of historical inquiry that all can share. It is, after all, historical-critical research that enables scholars of vastly different backgrounds and commitments to propose, test, and adjudicate claims in the public arena by commonly accepted criteria. In fact, it is this maturing, rather than waning, of historical-critical research that has enabled scholars like Sanders to be much more careful than their predecessors about distinguishing strictly historical claims, verifiable by any disinterested practitioner of the academic discipline of history, from theological claims that may be perfectly true but that are known and held by faith.

It is only in the light of this rigorous application of historical standards that one comes to see what was wrong with so much of the first and second quests. All too often, the first and second quests were theological projects masquerading as historical projects. Now, there is nothing wrong with a historically informed theology or christology; indeed, they are to be welcomed and fostered. But a christology that seeks to profit from historical research into Jesus is not the same thing and must be carefully distinguished from a purely empirical, historical quest for Jesus that prescind from or brackets what is known by faith. This is not to betray faith. It is only to recognize and honor the proper academic distinctions that have created separate departments of theology and history at major universities, each with its own proper scope, sources, methods, and criteria of validation. It is this clarification of distinct methods and goals that has made the present-day inter-faith collaboration possible. Just as the historical Jesus should not have been used as a stalking-horse for nineteenth-century liberal Protestant theology in Germany, so it should not be used today as a stalking-horse for a particular philosophy of language, a particular brand of liberation or feminist theology, or indeed one particular school of late twentieth-century Catholic theology or practice. Let the *historical* Jesus be a truly and solely *historical* reconstruction, with all the lacunae and truncations of the total reality that a purely historical inquiry into a marginal figure of ancient history will inevitably involve. After the purely historical project is finished, there will be more than enough time

to ask about correlations with Christian faith and academic christology<sup>(15)</sup>.

## II. Clarification of the Question of Reliable Sources

A second gain has been a critical rethinking and reexamination of the various texts proposed as reliable sources for the quest<sup>(16)</sup>. In the last few decades, practically every source imaginable has been exploited by one or another scholar. The Jesus Seminar has elevated the Coptic *Gospel of Thomas* to a coequal status with the four canonical gospels in a book appropriately entitled *The Five Gospels*. Actually, when one considers how John's gospel is largely dismissed by the Seminar, the book should have received the more pedestrian title of *The Four Gospels: the Synoptics plus Thomas*. In addition to *Thomas*, Crossan has highlighted the 2d-century apocryphal *Gospel of Peter*<sup>(17)</sup>. Within *Peter*, Crossan detects a primitive *Cross Gospel* that he claims is the key source of the Passion Narratives of all four canonical gospels. Pushing this romance with apocryphal gospels to the extreme, Richard Bauckham has appealed not only to the *Gospel of Peter* but also to the *Protevangelium Jacobi* and the Greek *Infancy Gospel of Thomas* to help resolve the question of the brothers and sisters of Jesus<sup>(18)</sup>. In my view, if we can use the *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*, we can use *Alice in Wonderland* just as well. As for the Coptic *Gospel of Thomas*, the careful saying-by-saying analysis of Michael Fieger persuades me that this gnostic gospel did know at least some of the canonical gospels<sup>(19)</sup>. In the Synoptic-like sayings, it often presents a conflation of Matthew and Luke, rewritten from a gnostic perspective. Hence it cannot serve as an independent source.

In the face of this uncritical romping through the apocrypha, I would urge a return to sobriety. It is a reasonable conclusion of historical-critical research — and not a ploy of apologetics — that

<sup>(15)</sup> On this whole question, see MEIER, *A Marginal Jew*, I, 196-201.

<sup>(16)</sup> To avoid multiplying notes, I refer the reader to the references listed in my treatment of the source question in *A Marginal Jew*, I, 41-166.

<sup>(17)</sup> J.D. CROSSAN, *The Cross That Spoke* (San Francisco 1988).

<sup>(18)</sup> R. BAUCKHAM, "The Brothers and Sisters of Jesus: An Epiphanian Response to John P. Meier", *CBQ* 56 (1994) 686-700. See my response in "On Retrojecting Later Questions from Later Texts: A Reply to Richard Bauckham", *CBQ* 59 (1997) 511-527.

<sup>(19)</sup> M. FIEGER, *Das Thomasevangelium* (NTAbh 22; Münster 1991).

the four canonical gospels are the only lengthy continuous sources for the historical Jesus that have come down to us. To be sure, the canonical gospels are permeated with the Easter-faith of the early church and must be carefully sifted with the criteria of historicity — of which more anon. But when so sifted, they remain our main sources, if also our main problem. Moreover, I readily grant that John's Gospel, the supreme example of systematic theology and high christology among the four gospels, presents special difficulties. Yet, in my opinion, nuggets of important factual information are preserved in John rather than the Synoptics. These nuggets include Jesus' close connection with the circle of John the Baptist's disciples before his own ministry began, his practice of baptizing followers during his ministry, his frequent trips to Jerusalem, the duration of his ministry over a number of years, the correct chronology of the Passion, and the non-Passover nature of the Last Supper. Certainly, the discourses in the Fourth Gospel are, in their present form, largely the product of the theology and perhaps the homilies of the Johannine community. But even here, individual logia can provide independent attestation of sayings also found in the Synoptics. John 12,25 on losing and keeping one's life (cf. Mark 8,35 par.; Matt 10,39; Luke 9,24; 14,26) is a striking case in point.

As for the rest of the NT, the debate over the extent to which Jesus' sayings (and a few facts about him) have been preserved in the Epistles, Acts, or Book of Revelation has been extensive and lively, though I tend toward a minimalistic view, feeling sure of only a few clear examples, mainly in Paul (1 Cor 7,10-11; 9,14; 11,23-26; see also Rom 1,3; 15,8; 1 Cor 15,3-5; also James 5,12; Heb 7,14; 5,7-8; Rev 3,3; 16,15). Outside the NT, while one may argue for the authenticity and independence of a few *agrapha*, the only significant independent source is Josephus' *Testimonium Flavianum* in Book 18 of his *Jewish Antiquities* (18.3.3 §63-64). While debate continues over this passage, I am heartened by the fact that a number of recent scholars have basically accepted something like my suggested reconstruction of the authentic core text<sup>(20)</sup>.

<sup>(20)</sup> See, e.g., WITHERINGTON, *The Jesus Quest*, 162-163, 276 n. 1; B.D. EHRMAN, *The New Testament. A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings* (New York – Oxford 1997) 189. While admitting that my approach has simplicity in its favor, THEISSEN – MERZ, *The Historical Jesus*, 65-74, prefer a hypothetical reconstruction that would have been neutral or even positive toward Jesus; however, they do not offer the precise wording of such a text for consideration.

But with Josephus, I tend to think that we have exhausted our independent extracanonical sources. Tacitus and Pliny the Younger reflect instead what they have heard Christians of their own day say. Despite various claims, no early rabbinic text (the earliest being the Mishna, composed ca. A.D. 200) contains information about Jesus, and later rabbinic texts simply reflect knowledge of, and mocking midrash on, Christian texts and preaching.

In brief, the real gain here has been a more careful evaluation and critical use of our main sources in the NT along with a more confident acceptance of the core text of Josephus' *Testimonium*, a small but precious piece of independent attestation to Jesus' existence, ministry, and fate. Even if we wind up rejecting most of the other sources proposed by various recent scholars, the critical self-awareness of *why* we reject them is itself a gain.

### III. A More Accurate Picture of Palestinian Judaism

A third gain of the present quest is a much more nuanced and variegated picture of Judaism at the time of Jesus. Without too much exaggeration, I think it could be said that many portraits of Jesus drawn by the first and second quests are automatically vitiated by the hopelessly outdated and at times viciously distorted descriptions of first-century Judaism that shape or warp these portraits. If the study of Jesus the Jew is to be taken seriously as a historical project, then the Judaism of the first century must be taken seriously in all its complexity and richness. It cannot be exploited simply as a negative backdrop, for instance as the religion of a fearsome, distant God who demands works-righteousness, against which the merciful Jesus, preaching the gospel of love, is then made to stand out and shine. Whether one looks at the Jesus of Rudolf Bultmann or the Jesus of Günther Bornkamm or the Jesus of Joachim Jeremias, one cannot help but feel that a 1st-century Jew is being stretched out on the procrustean bed of a German-Evangelical understanding of the theology of St. Paul<sup>(21)</sup>.

Perhaps, then, the single greatest justification of the third quest is its attempt to undo the caricatures of Judaism perpetrated consciously or unconsciously by the first two quests. Of course, this

<sup>(21)</sup> See, e.g., R. BULTMANN, *Jesus and the Word* (London 1934); G. BORNKAMM, *Jesus of Nazareth* (New York 1960); J. JEREMIAS, *New Testament Theology*. Volume One: The Proclamation of Jesus (London 1971).

*via negativa* of rejecting the distortions of Judaism in the first two quests does not guarantee a clear and uncontested picture of Judaism in contemporary research. One need only survey the competing portraits of the Pharisees drawn by Morton Smith, Jacob Neusner, E. P. Sanders, Anthony Saldarini, Shaye Cohen, Steve Mason, Günter Stemberger, and Roland Deines to appreciate the witty remark of Prof. Joseph Sievers: we know considerably less about the Pharisees than an earlier generation "knew"<sup>(22)</sup>. Nevertheless, there is a positive gain here. One cannot read such works as Sanders's *Judaism: Practice and Belief* or Vermes's *Jesus the Jew* and proceed to repeat the caricatures of Judaism that used to make it the perfect foil of Jesus or Christianity. One is instead challenged to explain where on the complex and confusing map of first-century Judaism one intends to locate Jesus. In my opinion, the phrase "Jesus the Jew" has become an academic cliché. The real challenge is to unpack that phrase and specify *what sort of* 1st-century Jew Jesus was<sup>(23)</sup>.

(22) For a few examples of the huge literature on the subject, see, e.g., M. SMITH, "Palestinian Judaism in the First Century", *Israel: Its Role in Civilization* (ed. M. DAVIS) (New York 1956) 67-81; S.J.D. COHEN, "The Significance of Yavneh: Pharisees, Rabbis and the End of Jewish Sectarianism", *HUCA* 55 (1984) 27-53; id., *From the Maccabees to the Mishnah* (Philadelphia 1987) 124-164; A.J. SALDARINI, *Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees in Palestinian Society* (Wilmington, DE 1988); E.P. SANDERS, *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishna* (London 1990) 97-254; id., *Judaism. Practice & Belief 63 BCE-66CE* (London 1992) 380-451; J. NEUSNER, *The Rabbinic Traditions about the Pharisees before 70* (3 vols.; Leiden 1971); id., "Mr. Sanders' Pharisees and Mine", *SJT* 44 (1991) 73-95; id., "The Mishna in Philosophical Context and Out of Canonical Bounds", *JBL* 112 (1993) 291-304; S. MASON, *Flavius Josephus on the Pharisees* (SPB 39; Leiden 1991); C.A. EVANS, "Mishna and Messiah 'In Context': Some Comments on Jacob Neusner's Proposals", *JBL* 112 (1993) 267-289; G. STEMBERGER, *Jewish Contemporaries of Jesus. Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes* (Minneapolis 1995). For a *Forschungsgeschichte* on the Pharisees up to the 1950s, see R. DEINES, *Die Pharisäer* (WUNT 101; Tübingen 1997). A sober counterbalance to Deines' relative optimism about identifying the Pharisees and Pharisaic teaching is found in J. Sievers's fine essay, "Who Were the Pharisees?" *Hillel and Jesus* (ed. J.H. CHARLESWORTH – L.L. JOHNS) (Minneapolis 1997) 137-155. On p. 138 he remarks: "After over two decades of research [from Jacob Neusner to Steve Mason], there is at least one assured result: we know considerably less about the Pharisees than an earlier generation 'knew'".

(23) On the vexed problem of Jewish identity in the first centuries B.C. and A.D., see S.J.D. COHEN, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Hellenistic Culture and Society 31; Berkeley – Los Angeles – London 1999).

It was precisely to underline and pose that question as sharply as possible that I chose the provocative title of my series, *A Marginal Jew*<sup>(24)</sup>. “Marginal” was my way of trying to pose the problem of Jesus’ precise place on the map of Judaism without resorting to the strategy of speaking about “Judaisms” in the plural, a popular locution in the United States today<sup>(25)</sup>. While understandable as a way of overcoming a naïve idea of some sort of monolithic Judaism in the 1st century, “Judaisms” strikes me as a questionable usage. After all, Christianity and indeed Catholicism display today remarkable varieties of expression and practice, yet few if any would want to condemn academics to speak constantly of “Christianities” and “Catholicisms,” however much the use of those phrases now and then might help highlight all the diversity hiding under the singular noun. Similarly, in the face of Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, and Reconstructionist Judaism, we still tend to speak in the singular of “modern Judaism”. So too, in my opinion, there is a justification for speaking of “ancient Judaism”. Most 1st-century Palestinian Jews, for all their differences, agreed upon such basics as Yahweh, the one true God who had chosen his people Israel, as well as on the importance of circumcision, the food laws, the Jerusalem temple, and the Mosaic Torah. Hence, despite the endless quarrels over various practices, there was a “mainstream” Judaism to which Jesus both belonged and yet over against which he consciously made himself marginal in various respects<sup>(26)</sup>. It is that paradox in the Jewishness of Jesus that needs to be taken seriously and explored in the context of present-day reconstructions of Palestinian Judaism at the turn of the era. To return, though, to my main point: the third quest deserves credit for its earnest attempt to sketch a historically accurate portrait of 1st-century Judaism in all

(24) I use “marginal Jew” not as an answer to the question but a way of posing the question. What I definitely do not intend by the phrase is any attenuation or elimination of the true Jewishness of Jesus. After all, from a sociological point of view, the sectarians at Qumran can be labeled “marginal” Jews, yet no one would question the intensity and commitment of their form of Judaism.

(25) See, e.g., J. NEUSNER – W. S. GREEN – E. FRERICHS (eds.), *Judaisms and Their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Era* (Cambridge 1987); Neusner gives a spirited and nuanced defense of the locution “Judaisms” in his preface, pp. ix-xiv.

(26) Somewhat similarly, Sanders argues for a “common Judaism” in *Judaism. Practice & Belief*, 45-303.



its diversity and vitality and to situate Jesus the Jew firmly within that portrait.

#### IV. New Insights from Archaeology, Philology, and Sociology

Connected with a better understanding of Judaism at the turn of the era is the fourth gain of the present quest: the intense use of new insights garnered from archaeology, philology, and sociology to locate Jesus more concretely in his time and place. While one can only be amused by the outlandish claims of some scholars about Jesus' connection with Qumran<sup>(27)</sup>, Qumran studies have indeed shed light, not so much on Jesus himself as on the religious milieu in which he operated<sup>(28)</sup>. Still, some surprising parallels between Qumran and the gospels tempt one to speculation. For instance, in its listing of the various miracles that God will work in the days of the Messiah, 4Q521 displays a tantalizing similarity to Jesus' reply to the disciples of John the Baptist in Matt 11,2-5 parr., complete with echoes of the prophet Isaiah and references to restoring sight to the blind and raising the dead. Especially striking is how both texts, right after the wonder of raising the dead, mention the further wonder of bringing good news to the poor (or: meek)<sup>(29)</sup>. In a different vein, documents like 4QMMT, the Temple Scroll, and the Damascus Document have underlined the importance of *hālākā* for pre-70 Judaism in general and the Essenes in particular<sup>(30)</sup>. In some

<sup>(27)</sup> See, e.g. B.E. THIERING, *Jesus and the Riddle of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (San Francisco 1992); R.H. EISENMAN, *James, the Brother of Jesus* (New York 1996).

<sup>(28)</sup> From the vast literature on the subject, see, e.g., J. MURPHY-O'CONNOR, "Qumran and the New Testament", *The New Testament and Its Modern Interpreters* (ed. E.J. EPP – G.W. MACRAE) (Atlanta 1989) 55-71; J. A. FITZMYER, *Responses to 101 Questions on the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York – Mahwah, NJ 1992); J.J. COLLINS, *The Scepter and the Star* (Anchor Bible Reference Library; New York 1995); id., "Ideas of Messianism in the Dead Sea Scrolls", *The Dead Sea Scrolls and Christian Faith* (ed. J.H. CHARLESWORTH – W.P. WEAVER) (Harrisburg, PA 1998) 20-41; H. STEGEMANN, *The Library of Qumran* (Grand Rapids 1998).

<sup>(29)</sup> Amid all the similarities, one must also honestly note the differences. In the Matthean text, proclaiming good news to the poor is the climax and conclusion of the list. 4Q521 breaks off soon after mentioning the proclamation of good news to the poor, but apparently other saving acts of God were listed.

<sup>(30)</sup> On 4Q521, see E. PUECH, "Une apocalypse messianique (4Q521)", *RevQ* 15, no. 60 (1992) 475-522; J.D. TABOR – M.O. WISE, "4Q521 'On Resurrection' and the Synoptic Gospel Tradition. A Preliminary Study",

cases, they shed important light on the various *Streitgespräche* in the gospels that involve legal problems, the hotly contested questions of divorce and Sabbath observance being prime examples<sup>(31)</sup>.

Qumran has also been of great importance for a better understanding of Palestinian Aramaic. To take but one example: the occurrence of *mārē* ("Lord") in the absolute, unmodified state in the Targum of Job (11QtgJob 24,6-7) as a title for God gives the lie to the old claim of Bultmann that such a usage was unthinkable as a title for Yahweh in Palestinian Judaism<sup>(32)</sup>. It also raises the intriguing possibility that the one and the same Aramaic word was used as a title of respect for, and even faith in, Jesus during his public ministry, that it was then used as a transcendent title for the risen Jesus in the cultic cry *Maranatha* from the very first days of Jewish-Christian belief and worship, and that it stands behind and helps explain the widespread use of *kyrios* for Jesus in the New Testament writings. Quite probably, Palestinian Jews for Jesus called him *mārē* during his public ministry just as the same Jews, now Jews for the risen Lord Jesus, invoked him as *mārē* after Easter.

Beyond such individual philological points is the larger question of ideas about the Messiah or Messiahs (here the plural is quite appropriate) circulating among Palestinian Jews around the time of Jesus. The documents found at Qumran have reinforced what was already evident from the OT pseudepigrapha in general: there was no one normative view of a Messiah at the turn of the era. Rather, various views about the Messiah or Messiahs competed or meshed in the minds of those Jews interested in the question. Not every Jew

---

*Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* 10 (1992) 149-162; COLLINS, *The Scepter and the Star*, 117-122; C.A. EVANS, "Jesus and the Dead Sea Scrolls from Qumran Cave 4", *Eschatology, Messianism, and the Dead Sea Scrolls* (ed. C.A. EVANS – P.W. FLINT) (Grand Rapids 1997) 91-100, esp. 95-97.

<sup>(31)</sup> On the question of the similarity of the prohibition of divorce by Jesus (Mark 10,2-12; Matt 5,32 || Luke 16,18; cf. 1 Cor 7,10-11) to prohibitions present in some of the documents found at Qumran (11QTemple 57,17-19; CD 4,20-5,10), see J.A. FITZMYER, "The Matthean Divorce Texts and Some New Palestinian Evidence", *To Advance the Gospel* (Grand Rapids 1998) 79-111. On Sabbath observance in the teaching of Jesus and the Essenes, see MEIER, *A Marginal Jew*, II, 756-757 n. 146.

<sup>(32)</sup> See J.A. FITZMYER, "The Contribution of Qumran Aramaic to the Study of the New Testament", *A Wandering Aramean* (SBLMS 25; Missoula 1979) 85-113; id., "The Semitic Background of the New Testament *Kyrios*-Title", *ibid.*, 115-142. The now outdated claim of Bultmann is found in his *Theology of the New Testament* (2 vols.; London 1952, 1955) I, 51.

was. Indeed, scholars today debate to what extent expectation of some sort of messiah or eschatological savior figure was a widespread or a relatively isolated phenomenon in Palestinian Judaism in the first centuries B.C. and A.D. Especially intriguing is the typology hammered out by John J. Collins in his *The Scepter and the Star*<sup>(33)</sup>. Among the various messianic types scattered in the intertestamental literature, he discerns the figures of a royal Davidic Messiah, a dyarchy of a priestly Messiah and a royal Messiah, the combination of the roles of teacher, priest, and prophet in one figure, and an angelic or heavenly savior figure who bears designations like "Son of Man" or "Son of God". This multiplicity of at times overlapping or meshing messianic types is enlightening for those who see in Jesus' implicit or explicit claims more than one messianic pattern. It seems to me that most of the material that we can trace back to the public ministry of Jesus reflects the pattern of a miracle-working eschatological prophet wearing the mantle of Elijah. Yet in the triumphal entry into Jerusalem and the cleansing of the temple there seems implied a certain royal Davidic claim. It may be that Jesus reflects the syncretistic tendencies of his time in meshing more than one messianic role in his own claim and conduct. The material from Qumran certainly could lend support to this view.

Likewise helpful has been the application of the insights of sociology and cross-cultural anthropology to the third quest<sup>(34)</sup>. All too often in the past, the historical Jesus reconstructed by scholars

<sup>(33)</sup> COLLINS, *The Scepter and the Star*; id., "Ideas of Messianism in the Dead Sea Scrolls", 20-41; see also NEUSNER et al. (eds.), *Judaisms and Their Messiahs*; J.H. CHARLESWORTH (ed.), *The Messiah* (Minneapolis 1992).

<sup>(34)</sup> Not surprisingly, the sociology of the New Testament has been used more successfully in treating Paul in particular and early Christianity in general (including the final form of individual gospels), where basic data are more abundant and less contested; see, e.g., A.J. MALHERBE, *Social Aspects of Early Christianity* (Baton Rouge, LA – London 1977); G. THEISSEN, *Sociology of Early Palestinian Christianity* (Philadelphia 1978); id., *The Gospels in Context* (Minneapolis 1991); B. HOLMBERG, *Paul and Power* (Philadelphia 1978); id., *Sociology and the New Testament* (Minneapolis 1990); H.C. KEE, *Christian Origins in Sociological Perspective* (Philadelphia 1980); B.J. MALINA, *The New Testament World. Insights from Cultural Anthropology* (Atlanta 1981); id., *Christian Origins and Cultural Anthropology* (Atlanta 1986); W.A. MEEKS, *The First Urban Christians* (New Haven – London 1983); C. OSIEK, *What Are They Saying about the Social Setting of the New Testament?* (New York – Ramsey, NJ 1984); R.A. HORSLEY – J.S. HANSON, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs* (Minneapolis 1985); J.H. ELLIOTT (ed.), *Social-Scientific Criticism of the New*

betrayed its origins in a university seminar room where abstract topics from Christian theology were readily placed on the lips of a supposedly 1st-century Jew. The insistence by present-day practitioners of the sociology of the New Testament that the historical Jesus be rooted in the soil, customs, and worldview of first-century Jewish Palestine with its values of honor and shame, its perception of limited goods, its ideas about kinship and marriage, its concern about purity rules, and its complicated political and economic systems is all to the good. One particular aspect of the sociological approach that has had great impact on academic studies in the United States is the question of the women who followed the historical Jesus during his public ministry. The great name here is Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, whose controversial book *In Memory of Her* has had incalculable influence on American academics, both male and female. In the last decade or two, a veritable flood of articles and books on the subject has flowed from American universities and colleges<sup>(35)</sup>. While a good deal of the material is obviously written with an eye to present-day problems in both church and society, scholars have

---

*Testament and Its Social World* (Semeia 35; Decatur, GA 1986); B.J. MALINA – J.H. NEYREY, *Calling Jesus Names* (Sonoma, CA 1988); J.H. NEYREY, *An Ideology of Revolt* (Philadelphia 1988); id., *Honor and Shame in the Gospel of Matthew* (Louisville 1998); R.A. HORSLEY, *The Liberation of Christmas* (New York 1989); id., *Sociology and the Jesus Movement* (New York 1989); J. PILCH – B. MALINA (eds.), *Handbook of Biblical Social Values* (updated edition; Peabody, MA 1998). Reliable application to the historical Jesus is more difficult to come by, though scholars like Theissen and Crossan attempt it in their reconstructions.

<sup>(35)</sup> Only a few examples of treatments of women in the Gospels (some translated from German or Italian) can be mentioned here: E.M. TETLOW, *Women and Ministry in the New Testament* (New York – Ramsey, NJ 1980); E. MOLTSMANN-WENDEL, *The Women Around Jesus* (New York 1982); B. WITHERINGTON, III, *Women in the Ministry of Jesus* (SNTSMS 51; Cambridge 1984); M.R. D'ANGELO, "Abba and 'Father': Imperial Theology and the Jesus Traditions", *JBL* 111 (1992) 611-630; K.E. CORLEY, *Private Women, Public Meals. Social Conflict in the Synoptic Tradition* (Peabody, MA 1993); C. RICCI, *Mary Magdalene and Many Others. Women Who Followed Jesus* (Minneapolis 1994); SCHÜSSLER FIORENZA, *Jesus. Miriam's Child, Sophia's Prophet*; I.R. KITZBERGER, "Mary of Bethany and Mary of Magdala – Two Female Characters in the Johannine Passion Narrative: A Feminist, Narrative-Critical Reader-Response", *NTS* 41 (1995) 564-586; W. CARTER, "Getting Martha out of the Kitchen: Luke 10:38-42 Again", *CBQ* 58 (1996) 264-280; B.E. REID, *Choosing the Better Part? Women in the Gospel of Luke* (Collegeville, MN 1996); E.G. WATSON, *Wisdom's Daughters: Stories of Women around Jesus* (Cleveland 1997).

come to appreciate both the danger of overlooking what is said or implied about women in the gospels and the enrichment of the portrait of the historical Jesus that results from taking the presence and actions of his female followers seriously.

#### V. Clarification of the Criteria of Historicity

A fifth gain of the third quest is the improvement in the articulation and use of criteria of historicity. When one looks back to the work of Bultmann, one is surprised at how intuitive many of his judgments about historicity were. For instance, one is almost embarrassed to read in his *Geschichte* his argument in favor of the authenticity of Luke 11,20 par., a logion that asserts that Jesus' exorcisms make present the kingdom of God. Bultmann says that this saying can claim "the highest degree of authenticity that we are in a position to accept for a saying of Jesus" because "it is filled with the feeling of eschatological power that the appearance of Jesus must have conveyed"<sup>(36)</sup>. The master skeptic of form criticism can be oddly subjective, not to say romantic, when evaluating the historicity of individual sayings. It is relatively rare that Bultmann argues the pros and cons of historicity at great length; usually a short pronouncement suffices. In the very act of studying Jesus' authoritative pronouncements, he creates his own.

The post-Bultmannians were usually more careful. In Ernst Käsemann, Günther Bornkamm, and their colleagues, we begin to see the more explicit articulation of individual criteria of historicity. A somewhat different approach, emphasizing more the arguments that could be fashioned from the supposed Aramaic substratum and poetic rhythm of Jesus' sayings, was championed by Joachim Jeremias and his followers. Yet it is only in the last few decades that the definition and proper application of criteria have been debated at length and refined<sup>(37)</sup>. Some criteria that were once widely appealed to have fallen out of favor, while others have been more carefully formulated. For example, an appeal to the presence of Aramaic vocabulary, grammar, and syntax in reconstructed forms of

<sup>(36)</sup> R. BULTMANN, *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition* (FRLANT 29; Göttingen 1970) 174.

<sup>(37)</sup> For a discussion of the criteria, see MEIER, *A Marginal Jew*, I, 167-195; an introductory bibliography on the question can be found in the notes on pp. 185-187.

the sayings of Jesus seems much less probative of authenticity today than it did perhaps fifty years ago. After all, a good number of the earliest Christians were Palestinian Jews whose native tongue was the same Aramaic Jesus spoke. How do we know that the supposed Aramaic substratum beneath a particular gospel saying goes back to Jesus teaching in A.D. 29 rather than to one of his Palestinian Jewish-Christian disciples teaching in A.D. 35? Likewise, the ease or difficulty with which a gospel saying can be retroverted into Aramaic supplies no sure criterion. Ease of retroversion might depend on the degree to which an Aramaic saying — be it from Jesus or from early Christians — was translated into Greek in a literal, wooden way or in an elegant, creative way sensitive to Greek modes of expression.

In a similar vein, Joachim Jeremias sought to use the distinctive rhythm and rhetorical structures he discerned in the sayings of Jesus as a criterion of authenticity. The problem here is the danger of circular logic. One must first have a fund of sayings that most probably come from Jesus before one can abstract from them particular rhythms and rhetoric distinctive of Jesus. And what if early disciples of Jesus, not as obtuse as those depicted in Mark's Gospel, imitated the rhetorical style of the Master they had listened to for a number of years? Presumably Jesus did not have a monopoly on rhythmic Aramaic and antithetical parallelism in first-century Palestinian Judaism. Similar objections could be raised against criteria that appeal to the Palestinian environment reflected in Gospel sayings, since some of Jesus' Jewish disciples obviously continued to live in Palestine for decades after his crucifixion.

But not all criteria have been found wanting when tested in the fires of debate. Thanks to scholarly dialogue and gradual corrections, critics are able to use some criteria today with a better sense of their proper purpose and limitations. For example, early on the precise distinction between the criterion of embarrassment (or contradiction) on the one hand and the criterion of discontinuity (or dissimilarity) on the other was hazy at best. Ongoing dialogue has helped refine these tools. To take one instance: the historicity of the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist is based largely on the criterion of embarrassment, not discontinuity<sup>(38)</sup>. Both the Baptist and the early

<sup>(38)</sup> On the historicity of Jesus' baptism by John, see Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, II, 100-105. On Jesus' practice of baptizing during his public ministry, see *ibid.*, 120-130.

church practiced a rite of baptism, as apparently did Jesus during his public ministry (John 3,22–4,1; cf. the negation of this embarrassing tradition by the Final Redactor of the gospel in 4,2). Hence the criterion of discontinuity does not apply.

However, the gospel sources betray an increasing uneasiness or embarrassment with the superior, sinless Jesus being baptized with a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins by his supposed inferior, John the Baptist. Thus, Matthew places an explanatory dialogue before the baptism to stress Jesus' superiority to the Baptist (Matt 3,14–15). Luke removes the Baptist from the event by noting his imprisonment by Herod Antipas (3,19–20) before mentioning ever so briefly Jesus' baptism (3,21); no administrator of the rite is explicitly indicated. The Fourth Evangelist suppresses the entire event of Jesus' baptism by John, while retaining the christological theophany, now narrated after the fact by the Baptist and completely detached from the original context of Jesus' baptism (John 1,32–34). Indeed, one might see the theophany itself as the earliest example of a Christian attempt to resolve the inherent embarrassment of Jesus' being baptized by John: no less an authority than God himself declares to Jesus that "you [and *not* the Baptist] are my beloved Son" (Mark 1,11 parr.).

While embarrassment, as a distinct criterion, has its own force and value, it also has, like the other criteria, its built-in limitations. First, relatively little material in the gospels falls under this criterion. Second, there is the hermeneutical problem that what *we* might judge embarrassing today might not seem embarrassing for the first Christian Jews. To take a famous instance: a prime example of the criterion of embarrassment has traditionally been the cry of dereliction from the cross (Mark 15,34 par.): "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Yet the more one appreciates that the Psalms of the suffering just man form an important underlying grid for the theology of the primitive Passion Narrative, and the more one appreciates that allusions to such psalms are scattered throughout the Passion Narratives of the four gospels, and the more one appreciates that Psalm 22 has already been alluded to earlier in the Marcan and Matthean narratives of the dividing of Jesus' garments (Mark 15,24 par.), and the more one appreciates that the opening words of Psalm 22 would be immediately identifiable to Christian Jews as a venerable prayer of lamentation, then the more one must question whether the criterion of embarrassment really applies here.

Obviously, embarrassment may have been a factor when Luke (23,46), toward the end of the first century, rewrote the Marcan Passion Narrative for a Gentile audience and substituted the much more comforting Ps 31,5 ("Into your hands I commend my spirit") for Psalm 22. But this tells us nothing about the original event. If anything, it highlights the importance of placing the criterion of embarrassment within the context of Jewish sensitivities. The criterion of embarrassment therefore has both distinct limitations as well as distinct advantages.

Needless to say, the same holds true of the criterion of discontinuity. Discontinuity was a favorite criterion first of Bultmann, then of Käsemann, and still later of Norman Perrin. Perrin, in particular, exalted it as the fundamental criterion that allows us to distill an assured minimum of material coming from the historical Jesus<sup>(39)</sup>. However, as many critics have pointed out since, discontinuity carries with it a number of problems. We are not so well informed about either Judaism or Christianity in the 1st century A.D. that we can always affirm with certainty that a particular action or teaching of Jesus is unique to him. Moreover, even when we can apply discontinuity, the obsession with what is unique to Jesus can result in a caricature cut off from the Judaism that formed him and the faith of the disciples that he formed. Jesus makes sense as a historical phenomenon and could function as an effective teacher in 1st-century Palestine only if he was very much connected with his past, present, and immediate future. Then, too, what is unique to Jesus is not always identical with what is central to his message. Discontinuity argues, for instance, that Jesus, unlike contemporary Judaism and later Christianity, forbade fasting by his followers. Now, this is a precious nugget of information; it confirms Jesus' sense that the kingdom of God was somehow already present, at least partially, in his ministry. Yet no one would want to make the prohibition of fasting the central or defining characteristic of Jesus' message and mission.

I would suggest that, if we are to continue to use the problematic category of "unique" in describing the historical Jesus, perhaps it is best to use it not so much of individual sayings or deeds of Jesus as of the total *Gestalt*, the total configuration or pattern of this Jew

<sup>(39)</sup> See, e.g., N. PERRIN, *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus* (London 1967) 39-43.



who proclaimed the present yet future kingdom, who was also an itinerant prophet and miracle worker in the guise of Elijah, who was also a teacher and interpreter of the Mosaic Law, who was also a charismatic leader who called disciples to follow him at great price, who was also a religious personage whose perceived messianic claims wound up getting him crucified by the Roman prefect, in the end, a crucified religious figure who was soon proclaimed by his followers as risen from the dead and Lord of all. It is this total and astounding configuration of traits and claims that makes for the uniqueness of Jesus as a historical figure within 1st-century Judaism.

Another criterion that has been refined in recent decades is the criterion of multiple attestation of sources and forms. Much more than in the past, scholars are aware that multiple attestation means something more than simply counting up the number of occurrences of a particular saying or story. One must be attentive to the intersecting of different sources with different literary forms, all attesting to the same basic idea or tradition. At times, it is perhaps a basic motif of Jesus' preaching rather than a particular saying that enjoys such multiple attestation. Then, too, what is multiply attested may be the *absence* of a particular motif in Jesus' preaching and deeds. For example, the absence of the motif of misogyny is multiply attested in the various wisdom sayings of Jesus (as contrasted with Jewish wisdom and some later Christian views), and this in turn is confirmed by his practice of permitting women to follow him, hear his teaching, and minister to him. But to appreciate fully the importance of a clearly defined criterion of multiple attestation, we should move on to the sixth gain.

## VI. Adequate Treatment of the Miracle Tradition

Indirectly connected with the clearer definition and more rigorous use of criteria is a sixth gain of the third quest: a more positive treatment of the miracle tradition in the gospels. Symptomatic of the disdain for the topic among the practitioners of *Religionsgeschichte* at the beginning of the 20th century is the remark of Wilhelm Bousset in his *Kyrios Christos*: "We are still able to see clearly how the earliest tradition of Jesus' life was still relatively free from the miraculous"<sup>(40)</sup>. Actually, this stance simply

(40) W. BOUSSET, *Kyrios Christos* (Nashville 1970; German original 1913) 98.

reflects the intellectual inheritance of the Enlightenment. A famous popular expression of the same mind-set in the United States in the early 19th century was an edition of the gospels published by Thomas Jefferson, who conveniently omitted all the miracles<sup>(41)</sup>. Bultmann, of course, was not so uncritical, though little more than a page of his *Jesus and the Word* focuses directly on Jesus' performance of miracles. If anything, the treatment of Jesus' miracles is even more jejune in Bultmann's *Theology of the New Testament* <sup>(42)</sup>. The post-Bultmannians were hardly more sanguine about the subject. Hans Conzelmann devotes a single paragraph to Jesus' miracles in his article on Jesus in the 3d edition of the *RGG*; Günther Bornkamm gives the subject some three pages out of 231 pages (counting according to the pagination in the English translation) in his book *Jesus of Nazareth*<sup>(43)</sup>. In contrast, Martin Dibelius dedicated a short chapter to miracles in his *Jesus* book<sup>(44)</sup>; but one must admit that, until recently, the post-Bultmannian refusal to give Jesus' miracles extensive treatment has prevailed in many reconstructions of the historical Jesus.

It is in this neglected area that various participants in the third quest have made solid contributions, though at times in a back-handed way. The great example of the back-handed contribution early on was the book by Morton Smith, *Jesus the Magician*<sup>(45)</sup>. Despite the sensationalistic portrayal of Jesus as a magician secretly practicing libertine rituals, Smith was right to criticize the unbalanced Bultmannian picture focusing on Jesus as a teacher and preacher of the word. Such a truncated picture, claimed Smith,

<sup>(41)</sup> T. JEFFERSON, *The Life and Morals of Jesus of Nazareth* (Washington, DC 1904, originally 1819-1820); cf. D.W. ADAMS (ed.), *Jefferson's Extracts from the Gospels* (Princeton 1983).

<sup>(42)</sup> In *Jesus and the Word*, some five pages (123-128) out of 154 pages (in the English translation) deal with belief in miracles in general, and little more than a page is devoted to Jesus' performance of miracles. In Bultmann's introductory sketch of the historical Jesus in his *Theology of the New Testament* (I. 3-32), there is not even a separate section on the question of Jesus' miracles.

<sup>(43)</sup> In J. Reumann's English translation (96 pages) of Conzelmann's *RGG*<sup>3</sup> article (*Jesus* [Philadelphia 1973]), the single paragraph on miracles is found on p. 55. Bornkamm's *Jesus of Nazareth* has no separate section on miracles; out of a text of 231 pages (in the English translation), only some three pages (130-133) treat directly of Jesus' miracles.

<sup>(44)</sup> M. DIBELIUS, *Jesus* (Sammlung Götschen 1130; ed. W.G. Kümmel; Berlin 1966, originally 1939).

<sup>(45)</sup> *Jesus the Magician* (San Francisco 1978).

largely ignored the massive presence of the miracle tradition in the sources, a tradition that went back to the historical Jesus and helped explain his immense — if ultimately fatal — popularity with the Palestinian crowds. Crossan took up and popularized Smith's insight, including (unfortunately, in my view) the identification of Jesus' miracles with Hellenistic magic<sup>(46)</sup>. Other scholars, such as E.P. Sanders and David Aune, confirmed Smith's positive insight about the importance of the miracles for understanding the historical Jesus, although they remained chary of Smith's enthusiastic championing of the label "magician" as an overall description of Jesus<sup>(47)</sup>. Individual monographs, such as Graham Twelftree's *Jesus the Exorcist* and Stevan Davies's *Jesus the Healer*, have continued to bolster the miracle tradition's claim to basic historicity<sup>(48)</sup>.

Still, as I came to treat the subject in Volume Two of *A Marginal Jew*, I felt that the entire question needed a fresh and full airing, beginning with basic methodological problems<sup>(49)</sup>. As one approaches this contentious subject, one must be clear from the start about what exactly a historian *qua* historian can say about Jesus' miracles. In my view, the claim that a particular event is an instance of God directly working a miracle in human affairs is, of its nature, a philosophical or theological claim that a historian may indeed record and study but cannot, given the nature of his or her discipline, verify. The assertion that God has acted directly in a given situation to perform a miracle is an assertion that can be affirmed and known as true only in the realm of faith.

Therefore, in the quest for the historical Jesus, what a historian

(46) CROSSAN, *The Historical Jesus*, 303-353.

(47) SANDERS, *Jesus and Judaism*, 157-173; D.E. AUNE, "Magic in Early Christianity", *ANRW* II/23.2, 1507-1557.

(48) G.H. TWELFTREE, *Jesus the Exorcist* (WUNT 2/54; Tübingen 1993); S.L. DAVIES, *Jesus the Healer* (New York 1995). On the wider question, see G. THEISSEN, *The Miracle Stories of the Early Christian Tradition* (Philadelphia 1983; German original 1974); H.C. KEE, *Miracle in the Early Christian World* (New Haven – London 1983); W. KAHL, *New Testament Miracle Stories in their Religious-Historical Setting* (FRLANT 163; Göttingen 1994).

(49) MEIER, *A Marginal Jew*, II, 509-1038. In these pages I attempt to treat the question in its many dimensions: modern philosophical problems, ancient conceptions and parallels, the ways of categorizing the Gospel miracles, as well as the individual narratives and sayings of Jesus on the subject. To avoid multiplying notes, I simply refer the interested reader to the relevant sections and subsections of vol. 2 that treat the issues that will be mentioned briefly in what follows.

acting within the restrictions of his or her academic discipline can do is ask a more modest question: whether the *claim* or *belief* that Jesus performed miracles during his public ministry goes back to the historical Jesus and his actions or whether instead it is an example of the faith and missionary propaganda of the early church retrojected onto the historical Jesus. As we have seen, Bousset claimed that the latter was the case, and many in the Bultmannian tradition have tended partly or wholly to agree. It is this older *religionsgeschichtlich* consensus that the many participants in the third quest have questioned. Many scholars today would emphasize that miracle working, faith healing, or exorcism formed a major part of Jesus' public ministry and contributed in no small degree to the favorable attention of the crowds and the unhealthy attention of the authorities.

In support of this emerging trend in the third quest, I maintain that a number of the criteria argue forcefully in favor of the global assertion that, during his public ministry, Jesus claimed to work what we would call miracles and that his followers — and at times even his enemies — thought he did so.

(a) The single most important criterion in this question is the multiple attestation of sources and forms. Every gospel source (Mark, Q, the special Matthean source, the special Lucan source, and John) as well as Josephus in Book 18 of his *Jewish Antiquities* (*Ant.* 18.3.3 §63-64) affirms that Jesus performed a number of miracles. This multiple attestation of sources is complemented by the multiple attestation of literary forms. For example, in Mark, Q, and John, both *narratives about* Jesus and *sayings of* Jesus (in addition, at times, to statements by other people) affirm Jesus' miracle-working activity.

(b) Closely intertwined with the criterion of multiple attestation of sources and forms is the criterion of coherence. The various narratives *about* Jesus and *sayings of* Jesus from many different sources do not simply lie side by side like discrete and hermetically sealed units. In a remarkable, unforced way they converge, mesh, and mutually support one another. For example, the various narratives of exorcisms in Mark, such as the Gerasene demoniac in Mark 5,1-20 or the possessed boy in Mark 9,14-29, cry out for some deeper explanation. What is the meaning of these exorcisms? How do they fit into Jesus' overall proclamation and ministry? The Marcan narratives, taken by themselves, do not say. But the various

sayings about exorcism in both Mark and Q give the answer in terms of God's powerful reign already present and vanquishing the power of Satan over the lives of individual members of God's chosen people. Likewise, many individual healing narratives in Mark lack any wider explanation, which instead is given by the Q logion of Jesus in Matt 11,5-6 par.: the hoped-for healing of God's people in the end-time, prophesied by Isaiah, is now coming to pass. What is noteworthy here is how deeds and sayings cut across different sources and form-critical categories to create a meaningful whole. This neat, elegant, and unforced "fit" argues strongly for the basic historicity of the miracle tradition in the gospels.

One could add secondary arguments from the other criteria, though their probative value in this case is debatable. For example, discontinuity does point out that accounts of Jesus' miracles were written down by Mark and Q some forty years after the events narrated. By comparison, written versions of the miracle traditions of Apollonius of Tyana, Honi the Circle Drawer, and Hanina ben-Dosa were composed only centuries after the events recorded. Then, too, in the early rabbinic sources, Honi and Hanina are represented as holy men whose powerful prayers were answered with needed rainfall or the healing of illness. They themselves, though, in the earliest traditions, are not represented as miracle-*workers* in the strict sense of that term — the sense in which Jesus was considered a miracle-*worker* during his public ministry.

Minor support might also be sought from the striking fact that, far from engaging in wild legendary creations of names of petitioners, beneficiaries, and places, most miracle stories are bereft of such concrete information. Indeed, a later gospel such as Matthew sometimes drops these traits when they exist in Mark. All the more noteworthy, then, are the very rare cases where such names do occur: namely, the raising of the daughter of Jairus, the healing of the blind Bartimaeus near Jericho, and the raising of Lazarus at Bethany. I hasten to add that these minor considerations are just that, minor. But they may have a certain confirmatory force when added to the arguments from the major criteria of multiple attestation and coherence.

Nevertheless, there is a logical Achilles' heel in this global argument, especially in regard to the criterion of multiple attestation. At first glance, the multiple attestation is massive and impressive. But what if we examined the various miracle stories in the different

sources one by one and found out that each one turned out to be a creation of the early church? The initially impressive argument from multiple attestation would collapse. Hence, after my chapter on the global argument for historicity, I felt that intellectual honesty demanded that I proceed to probe every single miracle story in the four gospels to see whether this objection held. After some four hundred pages of testing, I came to the conclusion that at least some of the miracle stories and sayings went back to the historical Jesus. The tally includes two or three exorcisms, various healings of blind, deaf, and generally sick people, and sayings of Jesus that affirm that he performed exorcisms and healings, material spread over the Marcan, Q, special Lucan, and Johannine traditions. Indeed, the stories of raising the dead found in Mark, the special Lucan tradition, and John, plus an assertion about raising the dead in a Q saying (Matt 11,5-6 par.) make it likely that, during his public ministry, Jesus claimed to have raised the dead. So much for an Enlightenment Jesus. As for the so-called "nature miracles" (a very inadequate category for various types of miracles), they did not fare as well in my testing. In my opinion, only the feeding of the multitude has a fair claim to go back to some remarkable event in Jesus' lifetime.

Still, the upshot of this lengthy inventory is basically positive. Not only the global argument but also the probing of all the individual miracle stories and sayings point to a historical Jesus who claimed and was believed by his disciples to have worked miracles during his public ministry. This conclusion, in turn, has great significance for an overall picture of the historical Jesus. Apart from the Jesus Seminar, most participants in the third quest would agree that Jesus was, at the very least, an eschatological prophet proclaiming the imminent coming of God's definitive rule and kingdom, a rule and kingdom made present even now in Jesus' authoritative teaching and mighty deeds of healing. As a number of sayings from different sources (like Mark 3,24-27; Matt 11,5-6 par.; Luke 11,20 par.) make clear, Jesus' exorcisms and healings are not just kind deeds to distressed individuals but signs and partial realizations of God's final victory over sin, illness, death, and Satan as he liberates and rules his people Israel "in the last days".

But this insight brings us to a further point. If Jesus presented himself as an eschatological prophet who performed a whole series of miracles, what Old Testament figure or model would naturally be conjured up in the minds of 1st-century Palestinian Jews? In the

Jewish Scriptures, only three great prophetic figures perform a whole series of miracles: Moses, Elijah, and Elisha. Of these three, Moses never raises an individual dead person to life. And if we ask which of these three is expected to return to Israel in the end-time to prepare it for God's definitive reign, the answer from Malachi and Ben Sira through the intertestamental writings to the rabbinic literature is: Elijah. I would therefore contend that it is not the early Marcan, Q, or Johannine traditions that first thought of Jesus in terms of the miracle-working, eschatological prophet wearing the mantle of Elijah, though they certainly may have developed this idea. The traditions coming from the historical Jesus strongly suggest that he consciously chose to present himself to his fellow Israelites in this light. How this coheres — or whether it coheres — with the gospel traditions that portray Jesus as the awaited Davidic Messiah or present him speaking of himself as the Son of Man is a problem with which I must still grapple. However one views the relationship among these competing traditions and titles, I think that the critically sifted data of the gospels demand that the depiction of Jesus as the eschatological prophet working miracles à la Elijah must be a key element in the reconstruction of the historical Jesus — which is to say, in effect, that the miracle tradition is likewise a key element. The validation of this insight is a major contribution of the third quest.

## VII. Taking the Jewishness of Jesus Seriously

Finally, many aspects of the six gains already mentioned in this article contribute to a seventh gain: an emphasis that was theoretically affirmed in the past but hardly ever exploited to its full potential — namely, the Jewishness of Jesus. As we look at the proliferation of titles and subtitles of books like *Jesus the Jew*, *The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant*, or *A Marginal Jew*, we can sense a shift in the very way scholars of any stripe feel they must approach the question today. And yet this new — or revitalized — orientation creates a new set of problems for scholars. For example, what writings are considered most relevant in defining the Palestinian Judaism that formed Jesus and his earliest followers? Needless to say, one must first look to the Jewish Scriptures. Yet nothing like a closed canon existed at the time, and one must wonder what an open and fluctuating canon would have meant to Galilean peasants as distinct from learned élites in Jerusalem. Moreover,

within the corpus of Jewish Scriptures, one must ask what books seem to have shaped Jesus' message the most. Certainly, Isaiah and the Psalms appear to be better candidates than Leviticus and Chronicles.

At the same time, we cannot think of Jesus endlessly poring over scrolls like some scribe housed at Qumran or in Jerusalem. Much of the Jewish Scriptures probably entered his memory and imagination through public reading and preaching. In turn, we must ask what interpretive, homiletic, or midrashic traditions mediated the Scriptures to Jesus. Are we to look primarily at what we call the Old Testament pseudepigrapha of an early date, or at some of the writings from Qumran that do not seem to be distinctive of that community but rather reflect widely disseminated ideas at the time, or should we look into the future, to the classical Targums or the early rabbinic literature, with all the massive problems of dating that involves<sup>(50)</sup>?

On the other hand, to what extent should we presuppose that Jesus had contact with the hellenized cities of Galilee like Sepphoris, the subject of much recent archaeological work, publication, and speculation<sup>(51)</sup>? Are we to imagine that he imbibed Greek culture at the Sepphoris theater? Or should we take seriously the gospel picture, in which Jesus frequents Jewish towns and villages in Galilee but is never active in any large hellenized city in Palestine with the obvious exception of Jerusalem<sup>(52)</sup>? This in turn raises the question of the validity of the whole approach of some members of the Jesus Seminar, who have so emphasized the pagan Greco-Roman background of Jesus' life and preaching and his similarity to a wandering Cynic philosopher that some of the Seminar's opponents have accused them of engaging in a new de-Judification of Jesus<sup>(53)</sup>.

<sup>(50)</sup> See, e.g., B. CHILTON, *God in Strength. Jesus' Announcement of the Kingdom* (Sheffield 1987).

<sup>(51)</sup> See, e.g., E.M. MEYERS et al., *Sepphoris* (Winona Lake, IN 1992); R. M. NAGY et al. (eds.), *Sepphoris in Galilee. Crosscurrents of Culture* (Raleigh, NC 1996).

<sup>(52)</sup> The precise nature of Judaism in Galilee at the turn of the era remains a subject of lively debate; see, e.g., S. FREYNE, *Galilee from Alexander the Great to Hadrian – 323 B.C.E. to 135 C.E.* (Wilmington, DE 1980); id., *Galilee, Jesus and the Gospels* (Philadelphia 1988); L.L. LEVINE (ed.), *The Galilee in Late Antiquity* (New York – Jerusalem 1992); R.A. HORSELY, *Archaeology, History, and Society in Galilee* (Valley Forge, PA 1996).

<sup>(53)</sup> On this, see POWELL, *Jesus as a Figure in History*, 16.



While I would not go that far, I think that the heavy emphasis by some scholars on larger pagan Greco-Roman cultural forces has obscured the specific Palestinian-Jewish coloration of this man from Nazareth. To be sure, Hellenistic culture had long since penetrated Palestine<sup>(54)</sup>. But the degree and nature of such penetration probably varied a great deal from city to town or from town to village, and various Jews responded variously to the cultural incursion, some consciously embracing it, others consciously seeking to avoid or exclude it, and others unconsciously imbibing it while remaining in their own eyes faithful Jews<sup>(55)</sup>. The exact extent of Hellenistic influence on Jesus himself is certainly debatable, and I do not favor an apologetic stance that would seek to exclude it entirely. Various aspects of Jesus' ministry, such as the model of the itinerant religious figure recruiting disciples who travel with him, may reflect wider Greco-Roman cultural currents. Nevertheless, I think that the sources we possess argue strongly that the preponderance of religious and cultural influences molding his life and message were native Palestinian-Jewish, however this category is more precisely defined. In brief, apart from the Jesus Seminar, most participants in the third quest, be they E.P. Sanders, James Charlesworth, or Craig Evans, have helped make "Jesus the Jew" more than just a fashionable academic slogan.

After having been militantly historical and non-theological throughout this article, I would like, paradoxically, to conclude with a theological postscript on the Jewishness of Jesus. In my opinion, the third quest's emphasis on the Jewishness of Jesus has willy-nilly made a lasting contribution to christology. No one could be stronger than myself when it comes to insisting on the distinction between the area of academic history called the quest for the historical Jesus and the branch of theology (i.e., faith seeking understanding) called christology. Yet theology, unlike basic Christian faith, is a cultural artifact reflecting the dominant intellectual tendencies of a given

(<sup>54</sup>) The classic work here, of course, is M. HENGEL, *Judaism and Hellenism* (Minneapolis 1981; German original <sup>2</sup>1973). It should be noted, however, that the precise degree of Hellenization in Palestine remains debated; see, e.g., L.H. FELDMAN, *Jew and Gentile in the Ancient World* (Princeton 1993).

(<sup>55</sup>) The need to distinguish degrees of Hellenization in Palestine according to region and time period was stressed in a lecture delivered by Dr. S. Freyne at the University of Notre Dame, IN, on April 20, 1999, as part of an international conference on "Hellenism in the Land of Israel".

time and place. Given the rise of history as a critical, academic discipline in the West in the 19th century, any christology that seeks to be intellectually and academically respectable in a European-North American context must ask how it should incorporate insights from the third quest into its theological project.

I would suggest that one definite gain that must be incorporated is the last one I have listed, the true and thorough Jewishness of Jesus. From the Council of Chalcedon onwards, the touchstone of genuine Christian faith in Christ has been the formula "truly divine and truly human" (<sup>56</sup>). Yet it is not too much of an exaggeration to say that, in defense of the "truly divine," the "truly human" has sometimes been obscured or swallowed up in a sort of crypto-monophysitism. What the third quest can supply as an aid to regaining the Chalcedonian balance is the firm *basso continuo* of "truly Jewish" as the concrete, historical expression and underpinning of the theological "truly human". To speak in Johannine terms: when the Word became flesh, the Word did not simply take on an all-purpose, generic, one-size-fits-all human nature. Such a view would not take seriously the radical historicity of both human existence and divine revelation. The Word became truly flesh insofar as the Word became truly Jewish. No true Jewishness, no true humanity. Hence, contrary to the charge that the high christology of orthodox Christianity necessarily leads to a covert theological anti-Semitism, I think that a proper understanding of the Chalcedonian formula, illuminated by the third quest, necessarily leads to a ringing affirmation of the Jewishness of the flesh the Word assumed. Even if the third quest has no other impact on contemporary christology, the emphatic reaffirmation of the Jewishness of Jesus will make the whole enterprise worthwhile. Something lasting will have been gained.

722 Flanner Hall  
University of Notre Dame  
Notre Dame, IN 46556

John P. MEIER

(<sup>56</sup>) The definition of Chalcedon (A.D. 451) can be conveniently found in DENZIGER-SCHÖNMETZER, *Enchiridion Symbolorum* (Freiburg <sup>32</sup>1963) 108 at #301: *Theon alēthōs kai anthrōpon alēthōs*.

## SUMMARY

Despite the questionable method and positions of the Jesus Seminar, the third quest for the historical Jesus has resulted in seven notable gains as compared with the old quests. (1) The third quest has an ecumenical and international character. (2) It clarifies the question of reliable sources. (3) It presents a more accurate picture of first-century Judaism. (4) It employs new insights from archaeology, philology, and sociology. (5) It clarifies the application of criteria of historicity. (6) It gives proper attention to the miracle tradition. (7) It takes the Jewishness of Jesus with utter seriousness.

## Nuovi sviluppi nello studio della storia dell'Israele biblico

La fondazione del Pontificio Istituto Biblico, all'inizio di questo secolo che ormai sta per concludersi, rispose chiaramente all'intento di contribuire, al più alto livello scientifico, al progetto di ricostruire la storia dell'Israele biblico secondo le due grandi linee portanti dell'approfondimento critico del testo antico-testamentario e della sua messa in contesto rispetto alle grandi civiltà dell'antico Oriente. Anche se il Pontificio Istituto Biblico non ha mai prodotto una «sua» storia d'Israele, esso ha peraltro prodotto numerosi ed essenziali supporti analitici e programmatici. Nel delineare ora alcuni problemi connessi alle più recenti tendenze in materia, è necessario ripercorrere — sia pur sommariamente — questo secolo di storia degli studi, giacché, le recenti tendenze sarebbero incomprensibili se non collocate al termine di un più lungo percorso.

### 1. *La storia d'Israele come strato redazionale*

È difficile o piuttosto impossibile segnare una data d'inizio negli studi sulla storia d'Israele. Per altre civiltà dell'antico Oriente quest'operazione è legittima, persino facile: civiltà scomparse e recuperate alla moderna conoscenza a seguito di scoperte archeologiche permettono di segnare un netto discrimine tra fonti antiche e ricostruzione storica moderna<sup>(1)</sup>. Per Israele, non solo la fonte per eccellenza (l'Antico Testamento) è sempre rimasta in superficie nella trasmissione culturale, ma inoltre le fonti stesse sono in larga parte di carattere storiografico — ricostruzioni, riflessioni, interpretazioni del passato — e su di esse si è innescata da subito una serie di revisioni senza fine che giunge sino a noi. Si potrebbe dire che abbiamo a che fare con una storiografia auto-referenziale, senza una vera e propria «storia» di riferimento o di base.

Volendo comunque scegliere un punto di partenza, sceglierei la metà dell'800, quando le scoperte archeologiche ed epigrafiche nel

<sup>(1)</sup> Si veda la recentissima presentazione di M. VAN DE MIEROOP, *Cuneiform Texts and the Writing of History* (London – New York 1999).

Vicino Oriente<sup>(2)</sup> cambiano strutturalmente la base documentaria: le fonti «esterne» rendono possibili controlli incrociati e più ampie contestualizzazioni. Senza fonti esterne, sulla base del solo Antico Testamento, le uniche operazioni storiografiche possibili sono quelle di una razionalizzazione dei dati (eliminazione di contraddizioni interne), di una resa più esplicita dei rapporti di causa-effetto (cioè di «spiegazioni»), infine dell'aggiunta di motivazioni e prospettive attuali assenti dalle fonti ma ad esse applicabili. In testi che risultano da interventi stratificati, un trattamento storiografico di tal fatta si qualifica né, più né meno come un ulteriore strato del testo, che rimette ordine tra i materiali anteriori, apparentemente con estremo rispetto per la loro attendibilità, ma in effetti reimpiegandoli per dar valore alla propria ideologia. Molte storie d'Israele scritte sia prima sia anche dopo la svolta archeologico-epigrafica della seconda metà dell'800 si presentano come strati o interventi redazionali, ovviamente post-canonici e dunque destinati a sopravvivere solo per pochi anni o decenni senza essere inclusi nel corpus di riferimento. E questo è tanto più vero per gli interventi di carattere maggiormente critico, di «smontaggio» del testo, di svelamento delle contraddizioni, di sovvertimento delle cronologie, ed altro.

## 2. La storia d'Israele come ipertesto

In presenza invece di fonti esterne, è possibile riscrivere ex novo la storia d'Israele, compito che segna appunto la fase per così dire moderna degli studi. Ma tale svolta, collocandosi proprio al culmine dell'analisi filologica interna di tipo critico, si è subito caratterizzata per l'idea che l'archeologia confermasse quella verità del testo biblico che l'ipercritica dei filologi aveva inteso smantellare<sup>(3)</sup>. Ha così preso corpo un progetto implicito, che non esito a definire grandioso: il progetto di quello che oggi si definirebbe un ipertesto, un gigantesco ipertesto. «Cliccando» ogni versetto, ed anzi ogni parola, del testo biblico si aprono «finestre» sterminate, fatte di epigrafi semitiche e di tavolette cuneiformi, di scavi e di reperti, di pa-

<sup>(2)</sup> Da ultimo M.T. LARSEN, *The Conquest of Assyria* (London – New York 1994).

<sup>(3)</sup> Le opere di A.H. SAYCE, come *The «Higher Criticism» and the Verdict of the Monuments* (London 1893), e altre successive, sono tra le più indicative del clima dell'epoca. Cf. B. ZINK – MACHAFFE, «Monumental Facts and High Critical Fancies», *Church History* 50 (1981) 316-328.

ralleli istituzionali e religiosi, di etimologie e di topografie storiche, di personaggi e di eventi. Gran parte della ricerca (sul campo e in biblioteca) sull'antico Oriente, effettuata dalla metà dell'800 ai giorni nostri è stata progettata, finanziata, eseguita, propagandata nell'ambizione di aggiungere altre finestre all'ipertesto biblico, di dar corpo ed immagine ad una storia d'Israele che restasse però il più possibile fedele alle linee portanti del testo unico e divino.

Questa sudditanza del dato esterno ed archeologico al testo biblico, questa sua funzionalità probatoria, si è perpetuata anche dopo il venir meno della pregiudiziale teologica sull'autore (o ispiratore) divino. E però la rinuncia alla pregiudiziale teologica ha prodotto un effetto importante. Nella visione tradizionale bastava una conferma esterna (un dato archeologico, un'epigrafe, un testo assiro, o quant'altro) per validare l'intero racconto così come tradito, per l'ovvio effetto di trascinamento derivato dall'autore divino. Invece nella visione più recente e laica una conferma esterna lascia aperto tutto il lavoro critico sulla fonte letteraria (intendo dire biblica), sui suoi scopi, sulle sue caratteristiche compositive, sulla sua eventuale tendenziosità propagandistica o apologetica.

Riepilogando dunque: prima della riscoperta dell'antico Oriente la moderna ricostruzione della storia d'Israele si configura come uno strato redazionale post-canonico; dopo la riscoperta, si configura come un colossale ipertesto. Entrambi questi progetti o paradigmi colpiscono per il loro impegno che non esito a definire grandioso; ma colpiscono anche perché, con tutta evidenza non sono storia ma piuttosto critica letteraria, chiarimento e commento di un corpus testuale dato. Il peso schiacciante del testo di riferimento è stato tale da impedire a lungo che si potesse formulare un progetto alternativo di ricostruzione propriamente storica. S'intende che questa situazione non era esclusiva del caso Israele — anche la storia greca e romana è vissuta a lungo come parafrasi degli storici classici — ma in esso ha assunto forme più spinte per motivi teologici.

### 3. *La «nuova storia»*

Comunque negli anni '60 si affermarono e divennero pratica comune principi storiografici più avanzati, che possiamo provare a sintetizzare brevemente in due punti.

Il primo punto è che occorre mettere al centro dell'attenzione non la fonte e neppure gli eventi (o men che meno i personaggi) ma il problema storico, e che per la sua elaborazione occorre met-

tere in opera tutte le fonti disponibili (letterarie ed epigrafiche, archeologiche ed ambientali) e tutte le problematiche (ideologiche, sociologiche, economiche). La storia dunque si trasforma da letteraria a multidisciplinare, da narrativa a processuale; si inquadra nei tempi della «lunga durata» e nel contesto ecologico; vuole essere globale (dalla storia del paesaggio a quella delle mentalità). È proprio il modo, di volta in volta diverso, in cui ogni ambiente storiografico e al limite ogni storico affronta un problema, a far risaltare la distanza tra storiografia e storia (ovvero fonti) di riferimento.

Il secondo punto è che l'analisi critica (lo «smontaggio») delle fonti, l'analisi semiologica del testo, da condursi secondo i principi della teoria della comunicazione (il testo inteso come un messaggio, con un emittente, uno scopo, un canale, dei destinatari) è qualcosa di più che non un esame preliminare dei dati, ma è operazione storiografica essa stessa: in quanto ricostruisce quei processi culturali che hanno prodotto il caricamento sulle fonti di tutte quelle implicazioni ideologiche che ne fanno elemento di interesse storico primario<sup>(4)</sup>. Credo sia doveroso sottolineare che la considerazione del documento come messaggio e l'analisi storico-letteraria come decodifica debbano molto alla diffusione delle comunicazioni di massa (appunto negli anni '60) e all'approccio critico ad esse connesso (la cosiddetta contro-informazione). Per quanto riguarda Israele, l'applicazione dei principi della cosiddetta «nuova storia»<sup>(5)</sup> è stata lenta (e magari in parte inavvertita) ma sicura<sup>(6)</sup>.

Il primo dei due principi enunciati sopra ha prodotto in particolare l'approccio o paradigma cosiddetto «sociologico», soprattutto applicato alla fase delle origini<sup>(7)</sup>. Al di là delle sue specifiche formu-

<sup>(4)</sup> Rinvio (per l'antico Oriente) al mio «Memorandum on the Approach to Historiographic Texts», *Or* 42 (1973) 178-194.

<sup>(5)</sup> Per una presentazione della «nouvelle histoire» cf. (fra l'altro) J. LE GOFF - P. NORA, *Faire de l'histoire* (Paris 1974) I-III. La scuola francese delle «Annales» è stata il principale laboratorio di rinnovamento storiografico.

<sup>(6)</sup> Ometterò, nella trattazione che segue, citazioni di opere degli anni '60-'70, ormai acquisite alla valutazione storiografica, per limitarmi ad una campionatura (spero sufficiente, ma comunque esemplificativa) di opere dell'ultimo ventennio. Per un'ampia storia critica della questione si veda Th.L. THOMPSON, *Early History of the Israelite People* (Leiden 1994) 1-170. Il più vivace foro di dibattito sul metodo è stato negli ultimi vent'anni il *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*.

<sup>(7)</sup> Da N.K. GOTTWALD, *The Tribes of Yahweh. A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel 1250-1050 B.C.E.* (New York 1979) (di ispirazione

lazioni (tutte più o meno criticabili e in effetti criticate), si è ormai da tempo imposta la distinzione tra due questioni del tutto diverse: da un lato abbiamo lo studio critico della presentazione storiografica post-esilica, che è fortemente ideologizzata e finalizzata alla legittimazione dei principi religiosi e nazionalistici allora dominanti, e che perciò mette al centro dell'attenzione il fatto migratorio e l'unità già originaria del popolo eletto. Dall'altro lato abbiamo la ricostruzione storica moderna che, una volta eliminati i tratti anacronistici, e basandosi su una più ampia contestualizzazione, dà rilievo alle varie componenti sociali e ai fatti di continuismo nel quadro dell'epocale transizione dall'età del tardo bronzo all'età del ferro<sup>(\*)</sup>.

Il secondo dei due principi sopra enunciati ha reso ormai abituale l'analisi dei singoli testi biblici piuttosto in funzione dell'epoca che li ha prodotti che non di quella cui si riferiscono, piuttosto in funzione degli intenti dell'autore e del committente che non in funzione del materiale narrativo impiegato, dunque come oggetto di analisi in quanto tali piuttosto che come miniere di informazioni sugli eventi. Se saldamente correlato al precedente principio (quello della contestualizzazione del problema storico), lo smontaggio critico delle fonti ne arricchisce le valenze storico-culturali. Se invece lo smontaggio (specie se di taglio strutturalista) resta fine a sé stesso, rischia di fuoriuscire dal lavoro storico per diventare un gioco (magari raffinato) di geometrie intellettuali.

#### 4. Fonti esterne e nuova archeologia

Per una più decisa presa di distanza dalla «gabbia» narrativa antico-testamentaria sarebbe certo giovevole disporre di una più robusta ed articolata documentazione extra-biblica. Permane invece assai netta la sproporzione tra un corpus biblico assai ricco e pesante ed una documentazione esterna irrimediabilmente povera. Tutte le

---

marxista «terzo-mondista», da movimento di liberazione), fino a F.S. FRICK, *The Formation of the State in Ancient Israel* (Sheffield 1985) (di stampo neo-evoluzionista), a R.B. COOTE – K.W. WHITELAM, *The Emergence of Early Israel in Historical Perspective* (Sheffield 1987), e a N.P. LEMCHE, *Early Israel. Anthropological and Historical Studies on the Israelite Society Before the Monarchy* (Leiden 1985). Si noti che l'approccio sociologico, dovendosi basare su una ricca documentazione testuale, tende a dar valore al racconto biblico.

(\*) Sull'eredità del tardo bronzo (essenziale già nella visione di G.E. Mendenhall), cf. D.N. FREEDMAN – D.F. GRAF (eds.), *Palestine in Transition. The Emergence of Ancient Israel* (Sheffield 1983).



epigrafi palestinesi del primo millennio a.C. si possono comodamente raccogliere in un libretto di modesta dimensione; tutti i riferimenti ad Israele nelle fonti cuneiformi o egiziane riempiono non più che un paio di pagine; le stesse scoperte archeologiche in Palestina danno un'impressione di povertà (mi riferisco al loro potenziale storiografico) se confrontate a quelle delle regioni vicine.

Se si provasse a scrivere una storia d'Israele sulla base delle sole fonti archeologiche ed epigrafiche coeve, mettendo da parte il testo biblico, facendo finta di cancellarlo dalla nostra memoria<sup>(9)</sup>, ebbene il risultato sarebbe di sconcertante modestia per quantità e per qualità dei dati disponibili e dei problemi formulabili. Si pensi alla ricorrente difficoltà di redigere una storia dell'intera regione palestinese che non sia in pratica una storia d'Israele con qualche cenno ai popoli minori e circostanti<sup>(10)</sup>. La difficoltà sta proprio nel fatto che per questi altri popoli non si dispone d'altro che di archeologia e poche epigrafi: le «Bibbie» di Damasco, di Tiro, di Gaza, di Moab, che pur certamente esistettero, sono perse per sempre.

Il permanere dello sbilanciamento documentario ha perpetuato a tutt'oggi (almeno in certi ambienti) la vecchia sudditanza dei dati archeologici al testo biblico, con l'annosa domanda se i dati dell'un blocco confermino oppure contraddicano quelli dell'altro. E però c'è un'importante innovazione: al vecchio modo di usare storiograficamente l'archeologia, modo basato su monumenti e documenti, è subentrato un modo diverso, basato sulla cultura materiale e sull'uso del territorio. Ora, mentre il monumento induce ad un confronto di veridicità puntuale, l'analisi territoriale o di cultura materiale riguarda settori non direttamente confrontabili, e di più ampio respiro. Ne risultano alcune conseguenze, abbastanza rilevanti.

(9) J.M. MILLER, «Is it Possible to Write a History of Israel without Relying on the Hebrew Bible?», *The Fabric of History* (ed. D.V. EDELMAN) (Sheffield 1991) 93-102; cf. anche E.A. KNAUF, «From History to Interpretation», *The Fabric of History* (ed. D.V. EDELMAN) (Sheffield 1991) 46-47 nota 2.

(10) Da A.T. OLMSTEAD, *History of Palestine and Syria* (New York 1931), fino a H. WEIPPERT, *Palästina in vorhellenistischer Zeit* (München 1988) e a G.W. AHLSTRÖM, *The History of Ancient Palestine* (Sheffield – Minneapolis 1993). Segnalo anche A. GIARDINA – M. LIVERANI – B. SCARCIA AMORETTI, *La Palestine. Histoire d'une terre* (Paris 1990). Il recente (e ottimo) volumetto programmatico di K.W. WHITELAM, *The Invention of Ancient Israel. The Silencing of Palestinian History* (London – New York 1996) introduce l'equivoca ambiguità tra l'accezione geografico-descrittiva e quella politica e attualistica (quale contraccollo al Sionismo) dei termini «Palestina» e «Palestinesi».

Innanzitutto, diventa possibile costruire la storia di una determinata regione in un determinato periodo (nel caso nostro: la Palestina nell'età del tardo bronzo e del ferro) partendo dallo scenario territoriale<sup>(11)</sup> e culturale fornito dall'archeologia, a livello «preistorico» (cioè senza testi) o per meglio dire «protostorico» (con testi esterni e/o posteriori). Sul quadro territoriale e culturale basato sull'archeologia, che risulta in una griglia spazio-temporale piuttosto rada ed essenziale, si possono poi innestare — quando noti — i fatti della storia politica con la sua griglia spazio-temporale più precisa<sup>(12)</sup>. In questo modo il carattere atipico o «unico» (come si suol dire) di Israele viene ricondotto ad una maggiore normalità, circoscrivendo l'unicità nei più precisi elementi dell'ideologia religiosa.

Il ruolo tardo-ottocentesco dell'archeologia quale conferma del testo biblico contro l'ipercritica testuale si dovrebbe a questo punto capovolgere: ormai il vero dissidio è tra una ricostruzione testuale di stampo tradizionale ed una ricostruzione archeologica di stampo innovativo, ove semmai l'archeologia si allea alla critica testuale e non certo all'immutabile «testo». In altre parole, diventa possibile immaginare che lo scaglionamento diacronico dei vari materiali testuali si accordi con le linee portanti della storia territoriale e culturale a base archeologica, isolando il racconto tradizionale nella sua specifica natura di prodotto ideologico datato.

Questo è stato — o meglio avrebbe dovuto essere — lo schema ovvio per scrivere una storia d'Israele negli anni '70 ed '80. Non conosco peraltro ricostruzioni complessive della storia d'Israele, scritte in quegli anni, che presentino in maniera coraggiosa e decisa queste caratteristiche progettuali: che partano cioè dallo scenario archeologico e dalla cronologia critica delle fonti, per utilizzare poi i materiali testuali nel ricostruire l'epoca di redazione e non quella dei personaggi implicati. La rivoluzione copernicana che si intravedeva possibile, ma non è stata adottata come paradigma normalizzato.

<sup>(11)</sup> Mi piace rilevare come la «Territorialgeschichte» di A. ALT, *Die Landnahme der Israeliten in Palästina* (Leipzig 1925), pur con la metodologia e le scarse conoscenze dell'epoca, abbia aperto una prospettiva fruttuosa.

<sup>(12)</sup> Su questa linea si pone il progetto di Th.L. THOMPSON, *Early History of the Israelite People* (Leiden 1994) e già in *The Origin Tradition of Ancient Israel* (Sheffield 1987). Per l'ultima versione cf. ora Th.L. THOMPSON, *The Bible in History. How Writers Create a Past* (London 1999).

### 5. La storia d'Israele come protostoria

Nell'affinamento metodologico del lavoro archeologico sul campo, hanno molto giovato gli apporti e le problematiche della preistoria<sup>(13)</sup>. La vecchia distinzione tra storia e preistoria è venuta a cadere, sia perché i quadri ricostruttivi delle culture preistoriche tendono a risultati propriamente storici, sia viceversa perché i quadri ricostruttivi delle culture storiche includono settori a base non testuale. Ora, gran parte del lavoro archeologico che si è venuto svolgendo negli ultimi decenni in Palestina, specie sulla fase cruciale del passaggio dall'età del bronzo all'età del ferro (fase cruciale perché contiene in sé la questione sull'origine d'Israele), è un lavoro condotto secondo una metodologia sostanzialmente protostorica: non più intesa come una volta a cercare conferme o smentite ad un corpus testuale di riferimento, ma intesa a ricostruire la situazione per linee interne.

Ho detto però «metodologia protostorica» e non «metodologia preistorica» non a caso, ma pensando al fatto che, una volta ricostruito il quadro insediamentale e della cultura materiale, e una volta tratteggiato il quadro delle strutture sociali e dei modi di produzione come la moderna esegesi archeologica consente di fare, diventa allora legittimo porsi il problema di un raffronto con le informazioni (posteriori o esterne che siano) che vengono dai testi<sup>(14)</sup>. Gli studiosi di protostoria europea, una volta ricostruita — poniamo caso — la civiltà di La Tène su base strettamente archeologica, si pongono poi legittimamente il problema se tale cultura abbia o non abbia qualcosa a che vedere coi Celti di cui parlano le fonti greche e latine<sup>(15)</sup>. Analogamente, una volta ricostruito per il periodo del ferro I palestinese un orizzonte di villaggi diffusi dalla Galilea al Negev, è legittimo chiedersi: ma non

(<sup>13</sup>) Per una prima informazione sulla «New Archaeology» si può consultare B.C. TRIGGER, *A History of Archaeological Thought* (Cambridge 1989); si noti che nel dibattito sull'archeologia palestinese il termine «New Archaeology» è spesso usato in senso lato (come archeologia metodologicamente ammodernata) più che in quello specifico (binfordiano).

(<sup>14</sup>) È stato peraltro rilevato, ad esempio da N.P. LEMCHE, *The Israelites in History and Tradition* (Louisville, KY 1998) 30-34, e da altri, che la conoscenza preventiva del testo di riferimento influenza inevitabilmente (e magari inconsciamente) la stessa ricerca e formulazione del dato archeologico.

(<sup>15</sup>) Sulla ovvia problematicità di un simile raffronto cf. C. RENFREW, *Archaeologia e linguaggio* (Roma - Bari 1989) 240-254.

si tratterà dell'Israele pre-monarchico?<sup>(16)</sup> E viceversa, constatando la mancanza di documentazione archeologica su un vasto e potente organismo politico nel X secolo, è legittimo chiedersi: ma allora dov'è il regno di Davide e di Salomone?<sup>(17)</sup> Non sarà forse tutta una finzione tarda? O dobbiamo ancora pazientare e cercare meglio?

In questa procedura sembra possibile evitare entrambi gli opposti estremismi: da un lato quello di una tranquillizzante conferma che porta ad accettare in toto il racconto biblico, dall'altro quello del sospetto di una colossale falsificazione che non sia neppure basata su informazioni o fonti autentiche per noi perse ma legittimamente postulabili. Io devo da un lato confessare la mia assoluta adesione all'impegno primario dello storico, che è quello di dubitare delle sue fonti; ma dall'altro devo riconoscere che i controlli possibili su fonti esterne hanno di norma confermato l'attendibilità dei racconti biblici di carattere storico<sup>(18)</sup> (altra cosa sono ovviamente le leggende etiologiche e i miti di fondazione). L'ipotesi di una colossale falsificazione, di una «invenzione» d'Israele (per alludere qui ai titoli di un paio di libri recenti)<sup>(19)</sup> mi pare in buona sostanza da respingere. Una redazione tarda e tendenziosa non esclude fonti antiche ed affidabili.

#### 6. *Necessità di storicizzare il concetto di «Israele»*

Resta però l'ostacolo, ben avvertito sin dall'impostazione well-hauseniana ma non ancora del tutto rimosso, di una concettualizzazione immutabile e perciò anti-storica dell'entità «Israele» — entità che è invece cresciuta su sé stessa nel corso dei secoli, e che una volta compiuta per intero la sua parabola ha poi riletto e riscritto a sua immagine e somiglianza il suo passato. L'Israele delle origini

<sup>(16)</sup> I. FINKELSTEIN, *The Archaeology of the Israelite Settlement* (Jerusalem 1988). Si veda anche D.C. HOPKINS, *The Highlands of Canaan* (Sheffield 1985).

<sup>(17)</sup> W.G. DEVER, *Recent Archaeological Discoveries and Biblical Research* (Washington 1990) 87-117 è decisamente ottimista. Per una valutazione delle posizioni di Dever come sostanzialmente conservatrici cf. Th.L. THOMPSON, «W.G. Dever and the Not So New Biblical Archaeology», *The Origins of the Ancient Israelite States* (ed. V. FRITZ — Ph.R. DAVIES) (Sheffield 1996) 26-43. Cf. più avanti (Appendice).

<sup>(18)</sup> La corrispondenza tra le cronologie biblica e assira è tale da far scartare l'ipotesi di una «invenzione» che non sia basata su fonti autentiche ed attendibili.

<sup>(19)</sup> Mi riferisco a EDELMAN, *Fabric of History*, e a WHITELAM, *Invention of Ancient Israel*.

non è certo identico all'Israele monarchico o esilico o post-esilico. Quel che va ricollocato nel corso dei secoli non è dunque un'entità già ben caratterizzata, ma un processo in divenire. I vari elementi costitutivi del concetto di «Israele» si sono costituiti uno per volta, non tutti insieme: c'è uno sfondo linguistico ed etnico, c'è un assestamento territoriale, c'è un sistema socio-economico, c'è un'unificazione politica (o magari più d'una), c'è un'ortodossia religiosa (il dio unico e il tempio unico), c'è una validazione storiografica, c'è una validazione legislativa<sup>(20)</sup>. E tutti questi aspetti, tutti questi percorsi, non sono stati univoci, rettilinei; hanno conosciuto regressi e riprese, oscillazioni e separazioni, anzi alcuni sono intervenuti quando altri erano già spenti per sempre.

La ricollocazione dei materiali deve tenerne conto, ma non è impresa da poco, e finora non mi pare sia stata eseguita in maniera soddisfacente. Il revisionismo ha sempre prodotto e continua a produrre più manifesti e prolegomena che non storie compiute. Dove trovare una storia d'Israele che abbia il coraggio di collocare nell'XI secolo la descrizione di una società gentilizia e di villaggio, ricostruita su base archeologica e magari non dissimile da quella descritta nel libro dei Giudici, ma di collocare nel IV secolo l'ideologia della comunità religiosa, il monoteismo yahwistico, la nostalgia monarchica, le tensioni interetniche, che pure emergono dallo stesso libro? Dove trovare una storia d'Israele che abbia il coraggio di immaginare il tempio di Salomone (o comunque il tempio di Gerusalemme in età monarchica) come un modesto annesso del palazzo reale, come un santuario tra i tanti, utilizzandone invece la dettagliata descrizione biblica di 1 Re 6-7 per quello che è, e cioè un «manifesto» progettuale per la costruzione del secondo tempio?

Gli stessi archeologi — sia i vecchi «archeologi biblici» sia i nuovi «archeologi siro-palestinesi» — hanno sempre cercato di collegare le risultanze dei loro scavi all'evento biblico, mai alla sua redazione. Attenti alle stratigrafie materiali, non lo sono altrettanto alle stratificazioni testuali.

### *7. Il rischio di fuoruscita dalla storia*

Purtroppo, la lentezza nell'adottare le conseguenze più radicali (e positivamente costruttive) del nuovo modo di fare storia, del nuo-

<sup>(20)</sup> È questo l'approccio da me tentato nel già citato *Palestine. Histoire d'une terre*.

vo ruolo e delle nuove potenzialità dell'archeologia, ha portato ad una sorta di sfasamento operativo rispetto alle più recenti tendenze nel campo dell'analisi testuale e letteraria. Se non sbaglio, la cosiddetta «nuova storia» e la cosiddetta «nuova archeologia» potrebbero interagire al meglio con una critica letteraria di matrice in ultima analisi wellhauseniana (nei principi di base, non nelle specifiche proposte che oggi sembrano alquanto conservatrici), intendo dire con una ricollocazione dei materiali testuali scaglionati nel tempo e gravitanti sull'epoca di redazione più che su quella di riferimento.

Invece le più recenti tendenze di critica testuale e letteraria mi sembrano caratterizzate da tendenze decostruttiviste, non indirizzate ad una nuova storia ma semmai a nuove teologie. Aleggja anche negli studi biblici la formula della «fine della storia»<sup>(21)</sup>. Sembra che la corretta collocazione dei materiali documentari nel loro specifico contesto cronologico ed ambientale non sia più considerata la base o il fine ultimo dell'analisi testuale<sup>(22)</sup>. Il genere letterario della «Storia d'Israele» viene ormai definito «obsoleto»<sup>(23)</sup>. A parafrasare i titoli di alcuni libri recenti ed assai stimolanti, c'è chi si chiede se sia possibile scrivere una storia d'Israele<sup>(24)</sup>, c'è chi si pone alla ricerca dell'Israele antico come qualcosa di problematico<sup>(25)</sup>, c'è chi ne parla apertamente come di una falsificazione storica<sup>(26)</sup>, o una

<sup>(21)</sup> Sulle tendenze post-moderne in storiografia si veda l'ottima rassegna di H.M. BARSTAD, «History and the Hebrew Bible», *Can a 'History of Israel' Be Written?* (ed. L.L. GRABBE) (Sheffield 1997) 37-64, che mi esime da ulteriori indicazioni bibliografiche.

<sup>(22)</sup> In linea generale sembra (per paradossale che sia) che l'attenzione prestata allo scaglionamento diacronico di fonti e redazioni era massima quando si adottava una cronologia piuttosto alta della composizione antico-testamentaria; e che invece tale attenzione sia del tutto caduta ora che si considera l'Antico Testamento «un libro ellenistico». È chiaro invece che più bassa è la redazione, più lunga la distanza di tempo rispetto agli eventi narrati (o inventati che siano), maggiore è il bisogno di esplorare il percorso di collegamento, dunque tradizioni o fonti documentarie o precedenti redazioni o altro.

<sup>(23)</sup> Ph. R. DAVIES, *In Search of 'Ancient Israel'* (Sheffield 1992) 13.

<sup>(24)</sup> GRABBE, *Can a 'History of Israel' Be Written?*; e già N.P. LEMCHE, «Is It Still Possible to Write a History of Ancient Israel?», *SJOT* 8 (1994) 163-188.

<sup>(25)</sup> DAVIES, *In Search of 'Ancient Israel'*. Per l'autore «Ancient Israel» (sempre virgolettato) è uno «scholarly (/theological) construct», diverso dal «biblical (/literary) Israel» e dallo «historical Israel» (che è il regno settentrionale).

<sup>(26)</sup> EDELMAN, *Fabric of History*. Si veda anche il titolo dei prolegomena di LEMCHE, *Israelites: «Inventing the Past»*. Anche Lemche ricostruisce l'Israele biblico e l'Israele storico come due entità separate.

costruzione letteraria<sup>(27)</sup>, o comunque come un edificio che debba essere smontato<sup>(28)</sup> (e non necessariamente rimontato). Il vecchio problema di valutare l'attendibilità di una ricostruzione storica in rapporto ad un referente reale, di fatti realmente accaduti, di realtà effettivamente esistite, è venuto meno essendo venuto a cadere il referente reale. Credo che questo atteggiamento «post-moderno» (come si suol definire) abbia molto a che fare con l'enorme proliferazione dei flussi di informazione indiretta e incontrollabile cui siano sottoposti. Il sopravvento dell'informazione sul fatto porta a dubitare dell'esistenza stessa del fatto: È il mondo «virtuale» nel quale siamo ormai immersi.

Certamente i principali sostenitori del nuovo corso (Th.L. Thompson, N.P. Lemche, Ph. Davies) ritengono di fare storia, di gettare le basi per una nuova — allargata nei problemi e nelle fonti, consapevolmente critica, finalmente corretta — storia d'Israele. La mia preoccupazione è che tale tentativo, che effettuato negli anni '70 e con piena adesione al «mestiere» filologico della critica testuale sarebbe stato certamente costruttivo, rischia ora (nel clima degli anni '90) di farsi coinvolgere nelle tendenze decostruttiviste e antistoriche dominanti.

Non mi addentrerò, per assoluta incompetenza, nei meandri peraltro affascinanti delle nuove teologie; mi limiterò a notare che un atteggiamento decostruttivista non aiuta la ricostruzione storica come la si intendeva fino ad anni recenti. Una volta smontato il libro dei Giudici (per restare nell'esempio già utilizzato sopra) in senso strutturale lévi-straussiano<sup>(29)</sup>, o in senso femminista<sup>(30)</sup>, o in qualunque

<sup>(27)</sup> THOMPSON, *Bible in History*, ha il sottotitolo «How Writers Create a Past». Si tratta dell'opera più recente sull'argomento (anche se largamente riprende le opere precedenti dello stesso autore) e che maggiormente minimizza il referente storico «reale».

<sup>(28)</sup> Talvolta si avverte una qualche confusione tra lo smontaggio della costruzione ideologica antica e della costruzione storiografica moderna; due problemi collegati ma distinti; cf. ad esempio LEMCHE, *Israelites*, 163-165.

<sup>(29)</sup> La lettura strutturale dell'Antico Testamento è stata avviata da E. LEACH, *Genesis as a Myth and Other Essays* (London 1969); cf. ora C. GROTANELLI, *Sette storie bibliche* (Brescia 1998).

<sup>(30)</sup> Cf. opere come M. BAL (ed.), *Anti-Covenant. Counter-Reading Women's Lives in the Hebrew Bible* (Sheffield 1989); I. TRIBLE, *Texts of Terror. Literary-Feminist Reading of Biblical Narrative* (Philadelphia 1984); A. BRENNER (ed.) *A Feminist Companion to Judges* (Sheffield 1993); G.A. YEE, *Judges and Method. New Approaches in Biblical Studies* (Fortress 1995).

altro senso che ne illustri i valori morali o le tensioni sociali o i meccanismi mentali, si intende che questi valori e questi meccanismi si pongano fuori della storia, che la loro datazione precisa sia impossibile o irrilevante: XI secolo o VI o III non fa grande differenza. È in pratica: posto che i racconti del libro dei Giudici non vengono più utilizzati per scrivere il capitolo (ormai inesistente) della lega tribale pre-monarchica, non si sa poi per quale altro capitolo utilizzarli e si finisce per non utilizzarli affatto (a fini di ricostruzione storica).

Non a caso le proposte storiografiche più stimolanti, nel variegato mondo del revisionismo, riguardano la critica del paradigma passato, e la sottolineatura dei suoi condizionamenti: penso all'inserimento dell'Israele biblico nell'Orientalismo quale discorso occidentale per produrre un proprio «doppio» su cui riversare inconfessabili brame<sup>(31)</sup>. Penso agli studi sul colonialismo come appropriazione del passato altrui al fine di legittimare il proprio<sup>(32)</sup>. Penso all'impatto del sionismo nel disegnare un modello antico di validazione per i progetti politici in corso<sup>(33)</sup>. Penso all'individuazione del contesto europeo (e specialmente tedesco) di fine '800 quale matrice della centralità dei concetti di «stato» e di «nazione»<sup>(34)</sup>. Penso alle rivendicazioni femministe di una storia che non sia solo al maschile, alle rivendicazioni terzo-mondiste di una storia che non sia sempre vista da Occidente, che fanno seguito a quelle marxiste di una storia che non sia solo quella delle classi dominanti. Tutto questo lavoro critico e auto-critico è di per sé lodevole e anzi ottimo; ma finché resta a livello di manifesto rivendicativo, esso deve ancora affrontare la parte più difficile del lavoro, che è quella di scrivere davvero una storia che non incorra né in questi peccati ormai svelati né in altri dei quali le generazioni future ci faranno senza dubbio carico.

(31) Sulla scia di E. SAID, *Orientalism* (New York 1979); *Culture and Imperialism* (New York 1993). Il riferimento è esplicito (e appropriato) in WHITELAM, *Invention*, 3-10 e passim.

(32) Per l'archeologia palestinese cf. N.A. SILBERMAN, *Digging for God and Country* (New York 1982); *Between Past and Present* (New York 1989). Cf. anche WHITELAM, *Invention*, 79-101 e passim.

(33) Il caso emblematico di Masada è stato sottolineato in particolare da WHITELAM, *Invention*, 16-17.

(34) J. SASSON, «On Choosing Models for Recreating Israelite Pre-Monarchic History», *JSOT* 21 (1981) 3-24; WHITELAM, *Invention*, 17-23. Analoga critica verrà in futuro fatta all'attuale enfasi sulla «etnicità» (ad esempio in LEMCHE, *Israelites*, 8-20), sulla scia di opere come E. GELLNER, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford 1983); A.D. SMITH, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford 1986).



### 8. *Il «dovere» di fare storia*

In altre parole, anche ammesso che la storia (tutta la storia, non solo quella d'Israele) sia storiografia, che al racconto ricostruttivo non corrisponda poi una «cosa vera», un fatto accaduto, che il rapporto tra testimonianza e realtà sia un falso problema, che insomma la realtà storica sia inafferrabile e comunque ormai perduta, e che si abbiano solo costrutti ideologici — ebbene, tutto ciò posto resta pur sempre anche per la nostra generazione il dovere di dar forma storiografica ai nostri costrutti ideologici, di scrivere la nostra storia d'Israele<sup>(35)</sup>, secondo le nostre metodologie e secondo le nostre consapevolezze critiche che sono comunque assai più avanzate di quelle delle generazioni precedenti.

Talvolta la protesta decostruttivista, almeno quella più «gridata» e polemica, mi sembra una fuga in avanti: una denuncia degli errori del passato (più facile quando si tratta di un passato non più recente), ma senza l'assunzione di responsabilità che consiste nel tentare davvero, in positivo, in concreto, una storia secondo un nuovo paradigma. Più fattivamente lavora semmai in questa direzione chi senza tanti proclami cerca di emendare ed aggiornare la propria metodologia di lavoro storiografico, puntando ad una più soddisfacente soluzione del problema centrale, che a mio avviso resta ancora quello di saldare una ricostruzione protostorica con una ricollocazione dei testi e delle ideologie che li hanno generati nel corso dei secoli.

Se dunque il progetto di scrivere una storia d'Israele è stato a lungo impedito dal peso della teologia tradizionale, ora esso è infastidito dal fiorire delle pretese decostruttiviste, e in particolare dalla pretesa che l'ideologia storiografica del nostro tempo sia appunto quella di negare la storia. Si deve constatare che il testo ha sempre schiacciato la storia: dapprima vietando di metterne in dubbio persino le virgole, ed oggi vietando di credere all'esistenza stessa di un referente reale.

Tra i due estremi opposti, forse c'è stato un momento in cui era possibile scrivere una storia d'Israele che non fosse una parafrasi della parola divina né un esercizio di smontaggio puro. Quel momento magico sembra scaduto: prima non si è potuto scrivere una storia d'Israele per carenze documentarie e pregiudiziali teologiche;

<sup>(35)</sup> Cf. la posizione costruttiva di GRABBE, *Can a History*, 19-36 (il quale peraltro mi sembra sottovalutare gli aspetti «ideologici» della questione). È interessante notare che le tendenze decostruttiviste si applicano soprattutto alla storia moderna, a periodi cioè per i quali le interpretazioni sono discutibili ma i «fatti» sono accertati e dati per scontati.

poi quando è stato possibile non lo si è fatto; ormai è troppo tardi e il progetto non interessa più in quanto attardato e fuori moda.

Ma forse siamo ancora in tempo per scrivere una storia d'Israele critica ed equilibrata, normale e magari noiosa, analoga a quella di tanti altri popoli e paesi e periodi. Si potrebbe obiettare che di storie normali e noiose ne abbiamo già tante, una in più non cambierebbe le cose. Un Israele normalizzato sul modello degli Aramei o dei Fenici o dei Neo-Hittiti, non avrebbe alcun interesse e alcun valore. Mi si consenta di non aderire a questa obiezione. In primo luogo non si può impunemente sottrarre una regione alla ricostruzione storica generale, non si può trattare del Vicino Oriente lasciando un buco nero, o comunque un caso anomalo, una diversità irriducibile, per di più in una zona-chiave (di mediazione e di raccordo) come la Palestina — o forse dovremmo dire il «Levante meridionale» per essere «politicamente corretti».

E poi, e soprattutto, si tratterebbe comunque di una storia affascinante, una storia in cui alla continua ristrutturazione del territorio e dell'insediamento umano, dei modi di produzione e delle strutture sociali e delle aggregazioni politiche si sovrappone la continua riutilizzazione ideologica del passato sotto la spinta delle situazioni presenti. Per uno studioso laico quale io sono, la storia d'Israele non sarà magari unica e speciale per decisione divina, per missione salvifica, per ruolo cosmico; ma è pur sempre alquanto speciale a motivo delle correnti di pensiero umano che in essa si sono dispiegate e che hanno influenzato tanta parte del mondo nei secoli successivi.

#### Appendice: *Quando far cominciare la storia d'Israele*

Se un'interpretazione fideistica dell'Antico Testamento doveva considerare parimenti «storici» tutti i periodi (sin dalla creazione dell'uomo), un approccio storico deve porre un discrimine (o almeno una zona di transizione) tra le narrazioni chiaramente mitiche e quelle chiaramente storiche, e segnare insomma una data d'inizio della storia d'Israele. Il periodo dei Patriarchi è stato difeso come storico almeno sino al libro di Thompson<sup>(36)</sup>, ma ormai non è più difeso da nessuno. Anche l'episodio dell'esodo è comunemente accettato come «fondante» ma storicamente inattendibile. La storicità

<sup>(36)</sup> Th.L. THOMPSON, *The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives* (Berlin 1974); cf. anche J. VAN SETERS, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven 1975).

del periodo dei Giudici, è ancora basilare nella ricostruzione del Noth (con la sua anfibiosità tribale)<sup>(37)</sup>, è ormai sostituita da una collocazione fuori del tempo («prima» della storia documentata) di leggende e tradizioni mitiche<sup>(38)</sup>.

Il dibattito si è ormai concentrato sulla storicità della monarchia unita (e non potrà scendere ulteriormente nel tempo, data la indubbia storicità della fase dei regni divisi). A parte gradazioni pur di rilievo che si possono proporre tra un Saul prevalentemente mitico<sup>(39)</sup>, un David fortemente fondante<sup>(40)</sup>, e un Salomone largamente storico<sup>(41)</sup>, la questione viene meglio impostata globalmente sull'esistenza o meno (la plausibilità o meno) di un Israele politicamente unificato nel X secolo a.C.<sup>(42)</sup>.

Da un lato è assai allettante una diagnosi di non storicità: un regno unito (mai esistito) come «mito di fondazione» per le aspirazioni all'unità politica di età postesilica (o magari già per le aspirazioni espansionistiche di Giosia nel quadro del collasso assiro); una cronologia per cifre «tonde» (40 e 40 anni per David e Salomone) di evidente valore generazionale; una modesta città-stato di Gerusa-

<sup>(37)</sup> Cf. da ultimo LEMCHE, *Israelites*, 97-107.

<sup>(38)</sup> Cf. GROTANELLI, *Sette storie*.

<sup>(39)</sup> D. EDELMAN, «Saul ben Kish in History and Tradition», *The Origins of the Ancient Israelite States* (ed. V. FRITZ – Ph.R. DAVIES) (Sheffield 1996) 142-159 è piuttosto positiva (un re di Gibeon, di data ignota, che si espande su Efraim e Beniamino). È un peccato che la Edelman non conosca la posizione (nettamente «mitica») di Grottanelli (*Sette storie*, 207-261 e studi precedenti dello stesso autore).

<sup>(40)</sup> N. NA'AMAN, «Sources and Composition in the History of David», *The Origins of the Ancient Israelite States* (ed. V. FRITZ – Ph.R. DAVIES) (Sheffield 1996) 170-186, sostiene che un regno davidico unitario non è impossibile ma resta incerto. Per posizioni negative cf. nota 45, e di recente N.P. LEMCHE, «From Patronage Society to Patronage Society», *The Origins of the Ancient Israelite States* (ed. V. FRITZ – Ph.R. DAVIES) (Sheffield 1996) 106-120; WHITELAM, *Invention*, 160-173.

<sup>(41)</sup> Per una posizione positiva cf. B. HALPERN, «The Construction of the Davidic State: An Exercise in Historiography», *The Origins of the Ancient Israelite States* (ed. V. FRITZ – Ph.R. DAVIES) (Sheffield 1996) 44-75 (2 Re 8 basato su iscrizioni reali coeve). Del tutto negativo KNAUF, «From History», 39.

<sup>(42)</sup> Si veda il già più volte citato volume edito da FRITZ e DAVIES; in precedenza ad esempio THOMPSON, *Early History*, 331-334, 409-412; DAVIES, *In Search of 'Ancient Israel'*, 63-67; Th.L. THOMPSON, «Text, Context and Referent in Israelite Historiography», *The Fabric of History* (ed. D.V. EDELMAN) (Sheffield 1991) 87-91; G.W. AHLSTRÖM, «The Role of Archaeological and Literary Remains in Reconstructing Israel's History», *The Fabric of History*, (ed. D.V. EDELMAN) (Sheffield 1991) 135-139; THOMPSON, *Bible in History*, 200-210.

lemme (magari con la sua «casa di David»)(<sup>43</sup>) sotto orbita filistea e nel nord un *chiefdom* ancora largamente tribale fino alla fondazione di Samaria e della dinastia omride. Si avrebbe un'emergenza politica di Israele (e Giuda) di tipo «morbido», o progressivo, correlabile agli analoghi processi formativi degli stati aramaici della Siria, e del tutto diversa dal processo inverso (dall'unità e potenza alla divisione e subalternità) delineato dalla storiografia biblica. Qualcosa di assai simile avvenne — se una mia proposta in proposito è accettabile(<sup>44</sup>) — per il regno antico-hittita che anche si intravede come un faticoso processo che va dalla frammentazione all'unità ma che il posteriore «editto di Telipinu» descrive al contrario come un processo dall'unità alla disgregazione, al fine di far valere il modello antico come base per la rifondazione proposta (o sognata) da Telipinu stesso. Il ruolo del fittizio re Labarna, modello di originaria coesione, troverebbe il corrispettivo nel ruolo di David(<sup>45</sup>).

D'altro lato, se la monarchia unita fosse tutta una artificiosa e funzionale costruzione posteriore, resterebbe sempre il problema di valutare storicamente i materiali che in tale costruzione sono confluiti. Le falsificazioni più accorte vengono sempre basate su materiali veri o verosimili, e molte notizie e passi delle storie di David e Salomone sembrano troppo dettagliate e ben ambientate per essere semplicemente attribuibili ad un falsario del III secolo. Se pure dunque si tratta di costruzione tardiva, il problema storiografico non si ferma qui: resta l'impegno a discernere la provenienza e la validità dei materiali impiegati, la loro datazione, il loro ambito di riferimento originario.

Ovviamente il problema è di enorme rilevanza: si può ancora concepire un Israele senza Patriarchi e senza Esodo, senza Giudici e senza lega tribale; ma se si elimina anche lo stato unitario davidico-salomonico, allora il concetto stesso di Israele scende nel tempo tanto da vanificarsi(<sup>46</sup>). Pur dando valore al progetto (peraltro ra-

(<sup>43</sup>) Sulle epigrafi di Tel Dan cf. da ultimo LEMCHE, *Israelites*, 38-43.

(<sup>44</sup>) «Storiografia politica hittita, II: Telipinu, ovvero: della solidarietà», *OrAnt* 16 (1977) 105-131.

(<sup>45</sup>) L'approccio critico-riduttivo al regno unito è stato avviato da G. GARBINI, «L'impero di David», *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa* III/13 (1983) 1-20 (= *Storia e ideologia*, 42-57) e da D. JAMIESON-DRAKE, *Scribes and Schools in Monarchic Judah* (Sheffield 1991).

(<sup>46</sup>) Cf. LEMCHE, *Israelites*, 155 «the only remaining possibility if we at all intend to speak about an Israelite nationality that has its roots in real history and not in an invented one».

pidamente fallito) di Giosia, con l'espansione territoriale, la centralizzazione del culto e la «riscoperta» della legge, il tempio «salomonico» avrebbe svolto il suo ruolo di riferimento centrale per una trentina d'anni appena, prima di esser distrutto.

Trattandosi di problema di tanto rilievo occorre riconoscere che l'assenza di riferimenti esterni ad un Israele unito nei testi del X secolo non è di per sé argomento valido: occorrerebbe chiedersi infatti qual è il contesto in cui avrebbe dovuto esser menzionato un Israele unito e invece non lo è<sup>(47)</sup>. Più seria è la questione del panorama archeologico. Un orizzonte «salomonico» di opere pubbliche è stato a lungo sostenuto su evidente suggestione del testo biblico e con evidenti forzature della stratigrafia e della cronologia. Una volta che la «lettura» stessa del testo cambia, anche l'orizzonte archeologico viene facilmente rimodellato in conseguenza. Attualmente la ricostruzione di un fiorente e unitario regno d'Israele nel X secolo non sembra avere adeguato riscontro urbanistico e monumentale<sup>(48)</sup>.

Università "La Sapienza"  
Piazzale Aldo Moro, 5  
00185 Roma

Mario LIVERANI

#### SUMMARY

The History of Israel has always been conditioned by the weight of the Old Testament in that the latter, with its complex editorial character and its quite special theological value, is practically the only source. After a long phase during which stories about Israel took shape as a redactional post-canonical stratum, and after research into archaeological and philological parallels in the surrounding Near East with a view to drawing up an enormous hypertext, modern research seemed to have rightly settled for a kind of "proto-historical" use of archaeological documentation connected with distribution of textual data according to periods of redaction or reworking. Moreover, recent tendencies of a "post-modern" type, implicitly or explicitly denying the existence of a real referent for the historiographic account, are likely to exhaust once again the historical reconstruction of the biblical text at the level of criticism (ideological, literary, theological or other).

<sup>(47)</sup> Cf. le considerazioni di Ch. SCHÄFER-LICHTENBERGER, «Sociological and Biblical Views of the Early State», *The Origins of the Ancient Israelite States* (ed. V. FRITZ – Ph.R. DAVIES) (Sheffield 1996) 80-81.

<sup>(48)</sup> Più ottimisti DEVER, *Recent Discoveries*, 87-117; V. FRITZ, «Monarchy and Re-urbanisation: A New Look at Solomon's Kingdom», *The Origins of the Ancient Israelite States* (ed. V. FRITZ – Ph.R. DAVIES) (Sheffield 1996) 187-195.

## Wie einer vom Propheten zum Verführer wurde<sup>(1)</sup> Tradition und Rezeption der Bileamgestalt

Einen Seher namens Bileam hat es offenbar wirklich gegeben<sup>(2)</sup>. Er hat, wie es Meindert Dijkstra ausdrückte, die zweifelhafte Ehre, der erste alttestamentliche Prophet zu sein, der im Land der Bibel ausgegraben wurde<sup>(3)</sup>. Denn auf einer 1967 im jordanischen Sukkot / Tell Deir 'Alla gefundenen Inschrift wird eine "Schrift Bileams, des Sohnes Beors, des Sehers der Götter" erwähnt<sup>(4)</sup>. Diese Schrift war auf den Wandverputz eines Gebäudes geschrieben, dessen Funktion nicht mehr ganz klar ist; es diente vielleicht als Versammlungsstätte<sup>(5)</sup>.

<sup>(1)</sup> Geringfügig überarbeiteter und um Literaturangaben ergänzter Probevortrag im Rahmen des Habilitationsverfahrens im Wintersemester 1998/99 an der Universität Hamburg.

<sup>(2)</sup> Diese Feststellung läßt sich natürlich nicht mit letzter Sicherheit belegen. Doch ist festzustellen, daß die Bileamgestalt durch die Deir 'Alla Texte besser belegt ist als alle anderen biblischen Propheten. Dies gilt umso mehr, wenn es sich bei der Nennung eines Yae ben Bileam aus Sarug, das nordöstlich von Karkemisch liegt, nicht nur um eine zufällige Namensidentität handelt (Hinweis von S. Timm). Vgl. dazu G. FRAME, *Rulers of Babylonia. From the Second Dynasty of Isin to the End of Assyrian Domination* (Toronto 1995) Text S.O.1002.3, Col i, Z. 8; P.E. DION, *Les Araméens à l'âge du fer: histoire politique et structures sociales* (EB N.S. 34; Paris 1997) 62.

<sup>(3)</sup> M. DIJKSTRA, "Is Balaam also among the Prophets?", *JBL* 114 (1995) 43-64; bes. 43.

<sup>(4)</sup> TUAT II, 138-148; J. HOFTIJZER – G. VAN DER KOOIJ, *Aramaic Texts from Deir 'Alla* (DMOA 19; Leiden 1976). Der Text ist ebenfalls zu finden bei K.A.D. SMELIK, *Historische Dokumente aus dem Alten Israel* (Göttingen 1987) 75-83.

Zur Interpretation vgl. etwa H.-P. MÜLLER, "Einige alttestamentliche Probleme zur aramäischen Inschrift von Dēr 'Allā", *ZDPV* 94 (1978) 56-67; DERS., "Die aramäische Inschrift von Deir 'Allā und die älteren Bileamsprüche", *ZAW* 94 (1982) 214-244; H. und M. WEIPPERT, "Die 'Bileam'-Inschrift von Tell Dēr 'Allā", *ZDPV* 98 (1982) 77-103; M. WEIPPERT, "Der 'Bileam'-Text von Tell Dēr 'Allā und das Alte Testament", DERS., *Jahwe und die anderen Götter* (FAT 18; Tübingen 1997) 163-188. Vgl. auch *The Balaam Text from Deir 'Alla re-evaluated*. Proceedings of the International Symposium held at Leiden 21-24 August 1989 (Hrsg. J. HOFTIJZER – G. VAN DER KOOIJ) (Leiden 1991).

<sup>(5)</sup> So einleuchtend R. WENNING – E. ZENGER, "Heiligtum ohne Stadt - Stadt ohne Heiligtum? Anmerkungen zum archäologischen Befund des Tell Dēr 'Allā", *ZAH* 4 (1991) 171-193; bes. 189-192, die aufgrund des Fehlens jeglicher Merkmale von Sakralarchitektur und -ausstattung zu der These kommen, das Gebäude könne einer Prophetengruppe als Versammlungsstätte gedient haben.

Leider sind nur Fragmente der Inschrift erhalten, deren Lesung und Zuordnung untereinander nicht immer sicher sind. Bei allen Fragen im einzelnen ist jedenfalls deutlich, daß die sogenannte 1. Kombination der Fragmente der Inschrift an eine Gestalt Bileam erinnert, der visionär in eine Versammlung der Schaddaj-Götter versetzt wurde und dort von kommendem Unheil erfährt. Es liegt auf der Hand, an eine Parallele zu biblischen Texten wie 1 Kön 22 oder Jes 6 zu denken, um nur die wichtigsten zu nennen. Die 2. Kombination teilt wohl Unheilsansagen dieses Sehers Bileam mit, die ebenfalls an Prophezeiungen erinnern, die in der Hebräischen Bibel überliefert wurden. Die Inschrift ist aus stratigraphischen und paläographischen Gründen in das 9./8. Jh. v.Chr. datiert worden, was durch C-14 Messungen bestätigt wurde<sup>(6)</sup>. Diese Datierung fügt sich interessanterweise sehr gut mit dem Auftreten von Propheten in Israel und Juda wie etwa Hosea, Amos, Micha und Jesaja zusammen.

Es kann m.E. kein Zweifel daran bestehen, daß der biblische Bericht über Bileam auf diesen offenbar bekannten Gottesseher anspielt. Dafür sprechen neben anderem die auffällige Verwendung der Wurzel  $\text{חזה}$  im 3. und 4. Bileamorakel wie in der Deir 'Alla-Inschrift (Zeile 1), die geographische Nähe des Inschriftenfundes und die Lokalisierung des in Num 22–24 berichteten Geschehens im Jordangraben und die ebenfalls bemerkenswerte Übereinstimmung bei der Nennung der *šadajin*-Götter (Z. 8) und von  $\text{שרי}$  (Num 24,4.16)<sup>(7)</sup>.

Der Zufallsfund aus Jordanien bestätigt zudem ein ganz wichtiges Element des Textes Num 22–24, auf das in diesem Beitrag das Augenmerk gerichtet werden soll: Bileam war Ausländer. Korrekter gesprochen: Bileam war keiner der Israeliten, die nach dem biblischen Bericht von Ägypten in das gelobte Land wanderten. Dies bedarf der Erläuterung.

<sup>(6)</sup> WENNING – ZENGER, "Stadt ohne Heiligtum", 193, fassen die jüngsten archäologischen Untersuchungen dahingehend zusammen, daß i.E. eine Datierung in die 2. Hälfte des 9. Jh. anzunehmen ist. Dazu passen auch die sprachgeschichtlichen Überlegungen von H.-P. MÜLLER, "Die Sprache der Texte von Tell Deir 'Allā im Kontext der nordwestsemitischen Sprachen mit einigen Erwägungen zum Zusammenhang der schwachen Verbklassen", *ZAH* 4 (1991) 1–31. Zu den C-14 Ergebnissen s. DIJKSTRA, "Balaam", 45.

<sup>(7)</sup> M. DIJKSTRA, "Response to H.-P. Müller and M. Weippert", *Aramaic Texts from Deir 'Alla* (Hrsg. J. HOFTIJZER – G. VAN DER KOOIJ) (DMOA 19; Leiden, 1976) 206–217, weist S. 207 noch auf die parallele Verwendung von  $\text{ער}$  in Num 24,14 und Komb. II,9 hin.

### I. Bileam - der erste Prophet

Zieht man beim Lesen der Bibel mit den Erzvätern zuerst durch das Land Kanaan, dann nach Ägypten und schließlich unter Moses Führung wieder hinaus aus dem Sklavenhaus hin zum Sinai und dann weiter Richtung Israel, so fällt auf, daß es zu dieser Zeit noch keine Propheten gibt. Zwar wird gelegentlich Abraham als Prophet benannt (Gen 20,7), und es gibt sogar eine Prophetenfamilie, nämlich die des Mose. Sowohl sein Bruder Aaron (Ex 7,1) als auch seine Schwester Mirjam (Ex 15,20) gelten als Propheten (נביא/נביא), ebenso auch Mose selbst, dies allerdings erst am Ende seines Lebens (Dtn 18,15+34,10)<sup>(8)</sup>. Doch anders als man es aus späteren Phasen der Geschichte Israels kennt, teilt Gott in dieser Epoche seine Befehle wie seine Weissagungen direkt an die Führer des Volkes und der Sippe mit<sup>(9)</sup>. Die Ausnahme ist Bileam, und bereits das macht meines Erachtens diese Figur so interessant.

Der Bericht in den Kapiteln 22–24 des Numeribuches ist mit dem Kontext nicht weiter verknüpft; wenn man ihn entfernen würde, wäre sein Fehlen wohl nicht zu bemerken<sup>(10)</sup>. Kurz zusammengefaßt, wird folgendes berichtet: Nachdem das Volk Israel in Ägypten aufgebrochen, zum Sinai gezogen war und dort die Weisungen Gottes empfangen hatte, bricht es erneut auf (Num 10) und versucht, auf direktem Wege nach Kanaan zu ziehen. Doch die Edomiter verweigern die Passage (Num 20,14–21). Daher muß die Gruppe nach Osten ausweichen und versuchen, über den sogenannten Königsweg zu ziehen. Das gelingt, indem man gegen die Könige Sihon und Og kämpft und das Land der Amoriter im heutigen Jordanien einnimmt. Verständlich, daß Balak, der moabitische König im Jordangraben, davon nicht begeistert ist und nach Wegen sucht, wie er gegen die Gefahr angehen kann.

Hier nun wird Bileam in die Szenerie eingeführt. Er, der nach den

(8) Implizit geht dies bereits aus den Auseinandersetzungen in Num 11–12 hervor, vgl. ibs. Num 12,6.

(9) S.K. KOCH, "Propheten/Prophetie II. Altes Testament", TRE 27 (1997) 477–499; bes. 480.

(10) S. dazu etwa E. BLUM, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch* (BZAW 189; Berlin – New York 1990) 116–117, der nur die Zufügungen in 22,4.7 (dazu unten) und den Vers 22,2 als Elemente der Verknüpfung mit dem Kontext ansieht. Blum bewertet Num 22–24 als ursprünglich eigenständiges Element der vorpriesterlichen Komposition KD.



biblischen Angaben immerhin ca. 500 km entfernt am Euphrat lebt<sup>(1)</sup>, soll kommen und im Auftrag Balaks das Volk verfluchen. Doch Bileam sucht in der Nacht ein Orakel Gottes, in dem ihm mitgeteilt wird, daß er nicht mit den Boten gehen soll, weil Israel ein gesegnetes Volk sei. Es fällt auf, daß sich der fremdländische Seher, der im Land der Götter Assur oder Ishtar lebt, an den Gott Israels wendet und ihm offenbar gehorcht; die Abgesandten Balaks müssen ohne Bileam zurückkehren.

Ein zweites Mal werden Boten geschickt, mit noch üppigerem Wahrsagerlohn. Doch wieder sagt Bileam, daß er nichts tun könne ohne einen Auftrag JHWHs, des Herrn (22,19). Diesmal jedoch wird ihm erlaubt, mit den Boten zu gehen. Im Ablauf des Geschehens wird aber nun derselbe Gott, der eben noch erlaubt hat, daß der Seher mit den Boten zieht, zornig und schickt seinen Engel, um Bileams Weg zu verstellen (Num 22,22-35). Doch nur die Eselin erkennt den Engel und scheut. Bileam, der von Gott gesandte Prophet, erkennt nichts, bis Gott ihm die Augen öffnet und ihm einschärft, daß er nichts weissagen möge außer dem, was Gott ihm eingegeben habe.

Diese Einschränkung wiederholt Bileam auch, als er dem König Balak begegnet (22,38), dann erst ist er bereit zur Konfrontation mit Israel. Diese geschieht offenbar so, daß Bileam und Balak von der Höhe der Berge des Jordangrabs herab auf das *Land* Israel schauen. Nach feierlichen Opfern soll nun der Seher sein Werk ausführen. Doch statt die Israeliten zu verfluchen, segnet er sie. Dies geschieht in vier poetischen Spruchreden. In der ersten wird Israel als Volk bezeichnet, das abgesondert von den anderen Völkern wohnt (23,9). Der zweite Spruch preist Israel als Volk, das einem Löwen gleich ist (23,24, vgl. Gen 49,9). Diese Prädikation steht auch im dritten Spruch, der mit dem

(<sup>1</sup>) Das in Num 22,5 genannte "Petor" ist wohl mit Pitru am Sajur, einem Nebenfluß des oberen Euphrats zu identifizieren, s. neben anderen M. GÖRG, "Die 'Heimat Bileams'", *BN* 1 (1976) 24-28 oder S. TIMM, *Moab zwischen den Mächten. Studien zu historischen Denkmälern und Texten* (ÄAT 17; Wiesbaden 1989) 150-151.

Davon unabhängig ist die Frage nach der tatsächlichen Herkunft des historischen Bileam, der wohl, wie erneut die Texte aus Deir 'Alla nahelegen, aus Transjordanien stammte. Dazu paßt auch die Lesart בִּי־עַמּוֹן (MSS, Sam, Pesch, Vulg: BHS) statt des schwierigeren בִּי־עַמֹּר in 22,5, die aber als sekundäre Erleichterung anzusehen ist, so auch MÜLLER, "Probleme", 61, Anm. 32. Anders H. SEEBASS, "Einige vertrauenswürdige Nachrichten zu Israels Anfängen: Zu den Söhnen Hobabs, Sichon und Bileam im Buch Numeri", *JBL* 113 (1994) 577-585, der die fragliche Lesart noch dazu der LXX zuschreibt (581, Anm. 26).

Ruhm des Wohnlandes Israels einsetzt (24,5.9). Der vierte Spruch schließlich, der sogar gegen den ausdrücklichen Befehl des Königs Balak gesprochen war, weissagt das Kommen einer mächtigen Gestalt, die Moab schlagen werde (24,17). Nach diesen Sprüchen zieht Bileam wieder nach Hause.

Im nächsten Kapitel, Num 25, geht der Blick der Erzählung wieder zu Israel selbst. Und die Israeliten, denen eben geweissagt worden war, daß sie die Moabiter schlagen werden, treiben statt dessen mit deren Töchtern Unzucht und beten sogar ihre Götter an (25,1.2). Das geht als Sünde vom Baal Peor in die Geschichte ein und ist für die Nachgeschichte der Bileamgestalt von großer Bedeutung.

Deutlich ist jedenfalls: Der erste Prophet, der Israel im Auftrag seines Gottes Heil und den anderen Völkern Unheil ansagt, ist nach dem biblischen Bericht ein Ausländer. Er ist fremdländisches Werkzeug in der Hand Gottes zum Heil seines Volkes, also nur *eines* Volkes. Der Text steht damit im Spannungsfeld zwischen universalem Gottesbild und partikularer Heilserwartung. Diese Spannung kann offenbar ausgehalten werden, es hat sogar den Anschein, daß die fremdländische Herkunft Bileams offenbar (noch) kein besonderes Problem darstellt.

## II. Das Wachstum des Bileam-Bildes in Num 22–24

Die literarischen Entstehungsverhältnisse der Bileamperikope sind wesentlich komplizierter, als die locker formulierte synchrone Textdarstellung vermuten läßt. Deutlich ist jedenfalls, daß es innerhalb des größeren Textkomplexes verschiedene Bilder des Propheten Bileam gibt. Bevor wir uns diese vor Augen führen, ist aber folgendes festzuhalten: Bileam agiert zwar wie ein Prophet, aber er wird an keiner Stelle so genannt. Nur in der Einleitung zu den beiden ältesten Orakeln wird er als "Mann, dem die Augen geöffnet sind" bezeichnet und als "Hörer göttlicher Rede, der des Allmächtigen Offenbarung sieht" (Num 24,3-4). Diese Bezeichnungen finden sich sonst nie im gesamten AT, ein weiterer wichtiger Hinweis auf die Besonderheit dieser Verse<sup>(12)</sup>.

Obwohl es in der Forschung keine Einigkeit darüber gibt, erscheint

<sup>(12)</sup> Es sei zudem daran erinnert, daß Amos in Am 7,12 als *חֹזֶה* angeredet wird. Vgl. WEIPPERT, "Der 'Bileam'-Text von *Tell Dēr 'Allā*", der ausdrücklich auf Am 7,10-17 als Parallele zur Struktur der Bileam-Inschrift hinweist und ihre literarische Gattung als Apophthegma bezeichnet (174).

es mir daher als wahrscheinlich, daß zunächst ein Grundbestand des 3. und 4. Orakels als selbständige Stücke überliefert wurden<sup>(13)</sup>. Nur diese haben eine eigene Einleitung ("Es sagt Bileam, der Sohn Beors...", Num 24,3-4 + 15-16), wie man sie von anderen Prophezeiungen her kennt. Sie sind also nicht auf den Kontext angewiesen. In diesen beiden Stücken finden sich zudem die deutlichsten Parallelen zu den in Deir 'Alla gefundenen Bileam-Texten<sup>(14)</sup>.

In der eigentlichen Erzählung Num 22-24 übt Bileam seine Weissagungskunst auf unterschiedliche Weise aus: Zu Beginn seiner Tätigkeit wird er als induktiver Mantiker vorgestellt, der durch seine Opfergaben die Eingebung Gottes heraufführt (23,1-5.14-15)<sup>(15)</sup>. In 24,1 wird dann aber ausdrücklich festgestellt, daß Bileam "nicht mehr auf Zeichen ausgehe", statt dessen sieht er das Kommende nun intuitiv. Es gibt also zwei Bilder vom Seher Bileam, ein weiteres Zeichen für das Wachstum dieser Texte<sup>(16)</sup>.

In kaum noch zu entwirrender Weise wurde wohl eine erste Bileam-Erzählung zu den älteren Weissagungen komponiert, die danach durch die beiden Orakel I und II kommentiert wurden. Wohl am Schluß der literarischen Geschichte stehen die Einfügung der Eselin-Perikope und ihre Verankerung im größeren Kontext der Wüstenwanderungsgeschichte<sup>(17)</sup>.

(13) So auch MÜLLER, "Probleme", 58-59, der die Sprüche auf die frühe Königszeit datiert, da sie auf Ereignisse aus der Zeit Sauls und Davids anspielen sollen.

(14) Dies gilt für die oben deutlich gemachten inhaltlichen Übereinstimmungen. Wörtliche Parallelen gibt es v.a. zwischen Num 22,9.20 und Satz 3 der Kombination 1, doch haben diese wegen des unspezifischen Inhalts m.E. keine besondere Bedeutung; vgl. dazu WEIPPERT, "Der 'Bileam'-Text von Tell Dêr 'Allā", 184-185. S. auch W. GROSS, "Bileam", NBL I (1991) 300-301, der die Erwähnung der *šdyn*-Götter mit den Sprüchen III und IV zusammenbringt, was ihn allerdings nicht von der These abbringt, daß diese Sprüche sekundäre Erweiterung der älteren Grundschrift der Bileam-Erzählung seien.

(15) Zur Unterscheidung zwischen induktiver und intuitiver Mantik vgl. K. KOCH, *Die Propheten I. Assyrische Zeit* (Stuttgart et al; 1995) 53-56.

(16) Vgl. zum Vergleich mit der Deir 'Alla-Inschrift H.-P. MÜLLER, "Die Funktion divinatorischen Redens und die Tierbezeichnungen der Inschrift von Tell Deir 'Alla", *Aramaic Texts from Deir 'Alla* (Hrsg. J. HOFTIJZER – G. VAN DER KOOIJ) (DMOA 19; Leiden 1976) 185-205.

(17) Dieses Modell orientiert sich an der Darstellung von H.J. ZOBEL, "Bileam-Lieder und Bileam-Erzählung", *Die Hebräische Bibel und ihre zweifache Nachgeschichte*. Festschrift R. Rendtorff; (Hrsg. E. Blum u.a.) (Neukirchen Vluyn 1990) 141-154. Allerdings erscheint mir die Aufteilung auf die klassischen

Zwar hat Num 22–24 immer als ein Paradebeispiel für die klassische Quellenscheidung gegolten<sup>(18)</sup>. Doch erscheint mir gerade in diesen Kapiteln der Gottesnamengebrauch keinen Hinweis auf unterschiedliche Quellen zu geben, wie besonders bei den offenbar sorgfältig komponierten Szenen, in denen Bileam sich an Gott wendet, deutlich wird: Hier richtet sich Bileam an יהוה, doch אלהים antwortet ihm (s. 22,8-9; 23,3-4)<sup>(19)</sup>.

Den offenbar älteren Stadien ist aber gemeinsam, daß in ihnen Bileam positiv gesehen wird: Er steht im Dienste Gottes gegen die Israel feindlich gesinnte Macht und wendet deren böse Absichten ins Gute; statt des Fluches wirkt Gott durch ihn Segen. An einer Stelle scheint die besondere Problematik sogar im Text angesprochen zu werden: Im zweiten Orakel heißt es: "Man sieht kein Unheil in Israel ... Denn es gibt kein Zaubern in Jakob und kein Wahrsagen<sup>(20)</sup> in Israel" (23,21a.23). Der hebräische Text kann jedoch auch etwas anders übersetzt werden (so bereits Targ. Onk.), so daß es heißt: Es gibt kein Zaubern und Wahrsagen *gegen* Israel<sup>(21)</sup>. In der Auslegungsgeschichte gibt es gute Gründe für beide Lösungen, doch mir will scheinen, daß man sich hier nicht zwischen Alternativen entscheiden muß, beide Verstehens-

---

Pentateuchquellen fraglich, ebenso ist Zobels Datierung — die Redaktionsarbeit soll in der mittleren Königszeit im wesentlichen abgeschlossen sein (154) — kaum noch haltbar.

<sup>(18)</sup> Das klassische Urkundenmodell wird etwa in den Lexikonartikeln s.v. "Bileam" von L. SCHMIDT (TRE), J.A. HACKETT (ABD) und H. SEEBASS (RGG<sup>4</sup>) zugrundegelegt. Vgl. auch die breitere Begründung bei H. SEEBASS, "Zur literarischen Gestalt der Bileam-Perikope", ZAW 107 (1995) 409-419, der selbst allerdings bei seiner Einordnung von Texten zur J-Schicht darauf hinweist, seine Annahme sei "hypothesen-sparend, aber nicht strikt beweisbar" (416).

<sup>(19)</sup> S. dazu auch J. MILGROM, *Numbers* (Philadelphia – New York 1990) 319, Anm. 56. Milgrom selbst hält die Kap. 22–24 für eine organische Einheit, aus der nur die Eselinnen-Episode zu entfernen ist, vgl. a.a.O., 467-468. Ein anderes Ergänzungsmodell, das mit dem 3. und 4. Orakel als den jüngsten Schichten rechnet, findet sich bei W. GROSS, *Bileam* (SANT 38; München 1974) 365-375, zuletzt zusammengefaßt im Art. "Bileam", NBL I (1991) 300-301. Vgl. auch das vierstufige Redaktionsmodell von H. ROUILLARD, *La Péricope de Balaam (Nombres 22-24). La Prose et les "oracles"* (EB.NS 4; Paris 1985).

<sup>(20)</sup> Das Stichwort קסם klingt auch in 22,7 an, wo es heißt, daß die Ältesten die Orakelzeichen (קסמים, HAL: "wohl Pfeillos") zu Bileam bringen.

<sup>(21)</sup> Zur Frage der Übersetzung des כ s. T.R. ASHLEY, *The Book of Numbers* (NICOT; Grand Rapids 1993) 481. Doch vgl. auch MILGROM, *Numbers*, 321, Anm. 72. P.J. BUDD, *Numbers* (WBC 5; Waco 1984) 252, bleibt bei der Übersetzung «against» (mit 255, Anm. 23a).

möglichkeiten sind ja richtig. Es gibt – in Übereinstimmung mit Dtn 18 – keine solchen verbotenen Dinge, daher muß ein fremder Seher geholt werden. Doch auch wenn dieser einen Fluch aussprechen sollte, was Bileam ja nicht will, selbst dann könnte er nichts *gegen* Israel ausrichten, denn da Gott auf Israels Seite ist, sind Zaubereien nutzlos.

Ein Abschnitt macht jedoch fraglich, ob Bileam wirklich nur gute Absichten hat. Es geht um die Episode mit der Eselin, in der ein deutlich anderes Bild von Bileam gezeichnet wird: Er hat Gott erzürnt, offenbar, weil er den Boten willfährig ist und Israel verfluchen will. Bileam wird als blinder Seher gezeichnet, der Gottes Engel nicht einmal sieht, als er direkt vor ihm steht. Selbst seine Eselin ist klüger. Statt daß der Mantiker auf die Vorzeichen im Verhalten des Esels achtet, schlägt er ihn, bis Gott Einhalt gebietet<sup>(22)</sup>.

Auch dieser Abschnitt ist kunstvoll komponiert<sup>(23)</sup>, doch in seiner theologischen Ausrichtung deutlich anders pointiert. Er zielt auf ein Bekenntnis Bileams, der Gott gegenüber zugibt, daß er gesündigt habe und wieder umkehren werde (22,34). Der Engel jedoch erlaubt das Weitergehen, schärft aber nochmals ein, daß Bileam nur sagen darf, was Gott ihm eingibt. Dies allerdings war im Ablauf der Geschichte schon lange klar. Doch die Vorzeichen, die nun für den Rest der Ereignisse gelten, sind anders gesetzt: Jetzt erscheint Bileam als Karikatur eines Sehers, der Israel schaden will. Nur durch Gottes Eingreifen wird diese Gefahr verhindert. Bileam aber ist mit seiner Eselin nicht nur auf dem Weg von Mesopotamien nach Israel, sondern im Gang der Erzählung wandelt er sich auch vom Propheten zum Verführer<sup>(24)</sup>.

(22) Im Unterschied zu dieser (herkömmlichen) Sichtweise hat H.-CHR. SCHMITT, "Der heidnische Mantiker als eschatologischer Jahweprophet. Zum Verständnis Bileams in der Endgestalt von Num 22–24", *Wer ist wie du, HERR, unter den Göttern?*. Festschrift O. Kaiser (Hrsg. I. KOTTSIEPER u.a.) (Göttingen 1994) 180–198, vorgeschlagen, die Eselin-Perikope nicht als negative Bewertung Bileams zu sehen. Stattdessen ziehe sie zusammen mit dem 3. und 4. Orakel darauf, daß auch Heiden die Erkenntnis des eschatologischen Plans Gottes offen stehe. Diese Einschätzung beruht vor allem auf der Überlegung, daß ausweislich Mich 6,5 auch in nachexilischer Zeit eine positive Bewertung Bileams möglich sei (dazu unten). Da auch die Spätdatierung der beiden Orakel aus Num 24 sehr fraglich ist, hat mich diese These nicht überzeugt.

(23) Dazu MILGROM, *Numbers*, 190 und Exkurs 57, S. 468–469. Vgl. auch die ausführliche Analyse bei H. ROUILLARD, "L'Anesse de Balaam. Analyse littéraire de Nomb., XXII, 21–35", *RB* 87 (1980) 5–37, 211–241.

(24) MÜLLER, "Probleme", 59, sieht noch andere Elemente in Num 22–24 über den Eselin-Abschnitt hinaus als bileamkritisch an, etwa 22,41; 22,34 oder 23,23 und 24,1. SCHMITT, "Mantiker", 192–195, und im Anschluß an ihn SEEBASS, "Zur

Die historische Verortung dieser Entwicklung ist beim gegenwärtigen Stand der Forschung kaum sicher durchzuführen. Sicher scheint mir zu sein, daß man die bis in die jüngere Zeit hinein vorgeschlagenen Datierungen von einzelnen Grundbestandteilen von Num 22–24 auf die vorstaatliche oder frühe Königszeit nicht mehr halten kann<sup>(25)</sup>. Die Inschriften aus Deir ‘Alla können nur einen ungefähren Anhaltspunkt geben, da man zwar die konkrete Niederschrift der Texte im 9./8. Jh. fixieren kann, aber völlig auf Vermutungen angewiesen ist, was das Alter dieser Bileam-Tradition angeht<sup>(26)</sup>. Dennoch scheint es mir am sinnvollsten, kurz danach, also um 700, die Übernahme der Bileam-Tradition nach Israel zu vermuten. Dafür sind zwei Überlegungen ausschlaggebend: Zum einen lassen sich in dieser Zeit die Anfänge der schriftlichen Fixierung von prophetischen Sprüchen sichern. Die Bestätigung der Unheilsweissagungen gegen das Nordreich durch den Fall Samarias und die Heilsgewißheit Zions nach der wundersamen Verschonung vor den Truppen Sanheribs waren wohl die wichtigsten äußeren Gründe dafür.

Wichtiger noch scheint mir ein weiterer Gedanke: Veranlaßt durch die politisch-militärischen Ereignisse der Zeit ist offenbar die Frage nach dem Verhältnis des eigenen Volkes zu den Nachbarvölkern theologisch bedeutsam geworden. Davon zeugen etwa der Grundbestand der Völkersprüche des Amos oder vergleichbare Weissagungen bei Jesaja. Durch den Untergang des Nordreiches wird sich die Überlegung, daß die fremden Mächte als Werkzeug Gottes agieren, geradezu aufgedrängt haben. Daher mag es zur selben Zeit auch problemlos möglich gewesen sein, die in der unmittelbaren Nachbarschaft umlaufende Tradition eines fremden Sehers aufzugreifen, der, vergleichbar Hosea oder Amos, dem eigenen Volk Unheil ansagte. Daß dies in der Konsequenz als Heilsansage für Israel auszulegen ist, belegt das vierte Orakel eindeutig<sup>(27)</sup>, dies mag auch die Übernahme der fremden Tradition erleichtert haben.

---

literarischen Gestalt”, 410-411, werten mittlerweile die Eselin-Perikope als weniger negativ; sie wolle zeigen, wie Gott Bileam in kleinen Schritten zu seinem Werkzeug machte.

<sup>(25)</sup> So etwa noch SEEBASS, “Einige vertrauenswürdige Nachrichten”, 583-584; ZOBEL, “Bileam-Lieder”, 154.

<sup>(26)</sup> Doch vgl. B. MARGALIT, “Studies in NWSemitic Inscriptions. Part II, The ‘Balaam’ Inscription from Deir ‘Alla (DPAT)”, *UF* 26 (1994) 282-302, der den Tod des historischen Bileam in der Zeit zwischen 845 und 835 vermutet (299).

<sup>(27)</sup> Geht man von der in der Forschung weitgehend unstrittigen Feststellung aus, daß besonders der vierte Spruch am Ende ab 24,18 deutlich erweitert wurde

Überzeugende Datierungsvorschläge für die folgenden Wachstumsstufen zu formulieren, ist kaum möglich. Deutlich scheint mir nur, daß die angesprochene Wahrsagerthematik im 2. Orakel Dtn 18 voraussetzt<sup>(28)</sup>; Stefan Timm hat für diese beiden Weissagungen eine Herkunft aus exilisch-nachexilischer Zeit vorgeschlagen<sup>(29)</sup>. Als *terminus ante quem* lassen sich höchstens die späteren Rezeptionsstufen der Bileamtradition nennen, die allerdings ebenfalls kaum sicher zu datieren sind. Erfolgversprechender und aussagekräftiger als diese hypothetischen Datierungsversuche erscheint mir demgegenüber das Nachzeichnen der folgenden Rezeptionsstufen des Bileamstoffes.

### III. Was sagen andere über Bileam?

Kehrt man zur synchronen Lektüre des Numeribuches zurück, so ist daran zu erinnern, daß Bileam nach Beendigung seines Auftrages heimkehrt (Num 24,25). Umso mehr überrascht, daß nur wenig später, in Num 31, wieder von ihm die Rede ist. Dort heißt es, daß die Israeliten nicht nur die Midianiter getötet haben, sondern auch Bileam, den Sohn Beors (31,8). Der habe nämlich, so 31,16, die Frauen der Midianiter beraten, daß sie die Israeliten abwendig machten und sich am Baal Peor versündigten. Aufmerksame Leser erinnern sich anders: Nach Num 25 waren es die Töchter der *Moabiter*, nicht der Midianiter, und die Israeliten hatten ihrerseits damit angefangen, sich mit ihnen zu verbinden<sup>(30)</sup>. Hinzu kommt: Bileam war längst nach Hause gegangen<sup>(31)</sup>.

(so etwa ZOBEL, "Bileam-Lieder", 152-153), sprechen m.E. keine inhaltlichen Argumente gegen diese Datierung. Die Überlegung von TIMM, *Moab zwischen den Mächten*, 125-127, daß die parallele Erwähnung von "Jakob" und "Israel" aus sprachstatistischen Gründen auf die Zeit Deuterojesajas weise, scheint mir nicht zwingend zu sein, zumal Timm nur die ersten zwei Orakel bearbeitet hat.

<sup>(28)</sup> Num 23,23 weist auf Dtn 18,10 zurück.

<sup>(29)</sup> *Moab zwischen den Mächten*; vgl. die Zusammenfassungen (146, 156). Allerdings sieht Timm das 3. und 4. Orakel nochmals jünger an, was sich m.E. nicht halten läßt.

<sup>(30)</sup> Dies greift zurück auf die Notiz Num 25,16-18, in der erstmals die Midianiter für die Ereignisse in Baal Peor verantwortlich gemacht werden. Für M. NOTH, *Das 4. Buch Mose. Numeri* (ATD 7; Göttingen 1977) 198-199, ist Num 31 daher als sehr späte Zufügung zum Gesamtpentateuch anzusehen, ähnlich GROSS, *Bileam*, 114.

<sup>(31)</sup> Die "Ältesten der Midianiter" sind in Num 22,4.7 nur sehr locker in das Geschehen eingewoben; die Notizen sind als Zusatz auszuschneiden, der wohl bei der Einfügung von Num 31 in den Zusammenhang vorgenommen wurde; so bereits NOTH, *Numeri*, 195, und andere.

Doch die Absicht wie die Entstehungszeit von Num 31 sind eine andere: Die Darstellung von der Auslöschung eines ganzen Volkes steht direkt vor der Verteilung des Ostjordanlandes an drei der Stämme Israels. Mit dieser Anordnung soll der Eindruck erweckt werden, als wäre das Land leer gewesen, ohne Gefährdungen oder Versuchungen wie fremde Götter. Das paßt gut zur Entstehungszeit dieses Textes, die sicher im nachexilischen Israel anzusetzen ist, als man nach der Exilerfahrung von der unbedingten Reinheit des Volkes als theologischer Notwendigkeit für das Heil ausging.

Doch es geht um noch mehr: Von den Midianitern hat Israel offenbar den Glauben an die Gottheit JHWH übernommen (vgl. Ex 3); dies ist eine der wenigen weitgehend akzeptierten Thesen in der alttestamentlichen Forschung<sup>(32)</sup>. Wenn man nun die virtuelle Auslöschung gerade dieses Volkes berichtet, trennt man sich — bewußt oder unbewußt — von den eigenen Wurzeln. Die eigene Identität soll durch Abgrenzung bestimmt werden; damit wird auch die Fremdheit der eigenen Ursprünge verdeckt<sup>(33)</sup>.

Es scheint nun so, als hätte man mit den Midianitern und der Reinigung der Vorgeschichte Gottes zugleich ein anderes, vergleichbares theologisches Problem entsorgt. Bileam wird nun nicht mehr als segensprechender Seher bewertet, sondern als fremder Verführer des wahren Volkes<sup>(34)</sup>.

Dieser Vorgang ist nicht nur der einen Stelle Num 31 zu entnehmen, sondern zeigt sich auch in den anderen Texten der Hebräischen Bibel, die auf Bileam Bezug nehmen. Nur ein einziger von ihnen, Mich 6,5, sieht Bileam positiv<sup>(35)</sup>. Hier wird eine Kurzfassung der Geschich-

<sup>(32)</sup> Vgl. E.A. KNAUF, "Midian und Midianiter", NBL II (1995) 802-804; 803: "... ist der verschiedentlich gezogene Schluß, daß Jahwe urspr. ein midianitischer Gott war, unausweichlich." Zur Sache s. jetzt K. KOCH, "Jahwäs Übersiedlung vom Wüstenberg nach Kanaan. Zur Herkunft von Israels Gottesverständnis", "Und Mose schrieb dieses Lied auf". Festschrift O. Loretz (Hrsg. M. DIETRICH – I. KOTTSIEPER) (AOAT 250; Münster 1998) 437-474.

<sup>(33)</sup> Vgl. auch M. KÖCKERT, "Vom einen zum einzigen Gott", BThZ 15 (1998) 137-175, der für das Dtn formuliert: "Die Strategie der Abgrenzung ist die Kehrseite der Alleinverehrung" (174).

<sup>(34)</sup> S. dazu auch E.A. KNAUF, *Midian. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Nordarabiens am Ende des 2. Jahrtausends* (ADPV; Wiesbaden 1988) 160-168.

<sup>(35)</sup> Eine Datierung von Mich 6,5 ist kaum möglich. Vgl. J. WEHRLE, "Micha (Buch)", NBL II (1995) 796-801; 799: "Datierungen von vorexilischer bis exilischer Zeit wurden für Mi 6,1-8 vorgeschlagen". SCHMITT, "Mantiker", 181, sieht Mich 6,5 unter Berufung auf O. KAISER, *Einleitung in das AT* (Gütersloh



te Num 22–24 gegeben: Balak hatte Böses mit Israel vor, aber Bileam hat ihm passend darauf geantwortet und das Volk bewahrt. Bileam steht hier in einer Reihe mit Mose, Aaron und Mirjam (6,4); gewiß nicht zufällig, waren diese doch mit Abraham die einzigen als Propheten bezeichneten Gestalten vor Bileam. Interessanterweise ist hier die Perspektive *gegen Israel* gerichtet, mit dem der Herr einen Rechtsstreit hat. Im Zuge dieser Auseinandersetzung wird an die Werkzeuge Gottes zum Heil Israels erinnert. Die Mosezeit bis zur Landnahme erscheint hier als goldenes Zeitalter; der Fremde Bileam gehört zu den substantiell wichtigen Heilstaten JHWHs (צדקת ידוה).

Die anderen Belegstellen für Bileam stellen ihn deutlich negativ dar: In Dtn 23,4–6 wird an Bileam erinnert, der gedungen wurde, um Israel zu verfluchen. Was wir bisher nicht wußten: Bileam hat, so Dtn 23, tatsächlich Israel verflucht, aber Gott hat seinen Fluch in Segen verwandelt. Es ist auch hier wieder bezeichnend, in welchem größeren Zusammenhang die Notiz zu finden ist: Es geht in Dtn 23,1–8 um die Bewertung fremder Völker, um die Frage, Angehörige welcher Völker in die Gemeinde Israels aufgenommen werden. Die Ammoniter und Moabiter dürfen keinesfalls aufgenommen werden, weil sie bei der Wüstenwanderung Israel behindert haben<sup>(36)</sup>. Bileam gerät hier also in den Sog der Verurteilung dieser Völker hinein. Anders gesagt: Das negative Urteil, das den fremden Völkern gilt, bestimmt auch die Wahrnehmung der Bileam-Tradition. Nun wird offenbar wichtig, daß Bileam selbst Fremdling war. Da er mit den Moabitern gemeinsame Sache machte, muß folglich auch er schlechte Absichten gehabt haben. In beinahe wörtlicher Übereinstimmung findet sich dieses Urteil über Bileam auch innerhalb des Geschichtsrückblicks in Jos 24,9–10.

Im Josuabuch findet sich noch eine weitere Erwähnung Bileams. In 13,22 wird nur mitgeteilt, daß Bileam zusammen mit den Amoritern und Midianitern umgebracht wurde. Seine Schuld bestand offenbar nur darin, daß er Wahrsager war, denn, so Dtn 18,12: “wer das tut, der ist dem HERRN ein Greuel, und um solcher Greuel willen vertreibt der HERR, dein Gott, die Völker vor dir”. Hier ist an das Orakel in Num 23,23 zu erinnern, wonach es in oder gegen Israel keine Wahrsagerei

---

51984) 237–238 als nachexilisch an; wobei Kaiser selbst den Text nur Micha abspricht und nicht weiter verortet. Auffällig ist aber, daß in Mich 6,5 das seltene Verbum *עָרַע* verwendet wurde, das noch Num 24,14 und DAT II,9 steht.

<sup>(36)</sup> Dies setzt die Traditionen aus Num 21–24 voraus. Daß die Midianiter hier in Dtn 23 nicht erwähnt werden, spricht erneut für die spätere Zufügung der Notizen in Num 22,4.7 und Num 31.

geben darf. Bileam wird also getötet, ohne daß konkret auf sein Tun Bezug genommen wird. Egal, ob er Israel fluchen oder segnen wollte; allein daß er Wahrsagerei betrieb, macht ihn den Fremdlingen gleich, die auszurotten sind.

Der letzte alttestamentliche Beleg für Bileam findet sich im späten Nehemiabuch (13,2): Hier wird der Text Dtn 23,5-6 ausdrücklich zitiert, daß Bileam von den Fremdvölkern gedungen wurde und Israel tatsächlich verfluchen wollte. Das ist Grund genug, um nach der Anhörung dieses Textes alles Mischvolk aus Israel auszusondern (Neh 13,3) und später das Land von allem Ausländischen zu reinigen (13,30). Bileam ist nun vom Propheten zum Prototypen des gefährlichen Fremden mutiert.

Der kurze Überblick hat gezeigt, daß es zwei Ausprägungen der Bileam-Tradition innerhalb der Hebräischen Bibel gibt: Nach der positiven, die in Micha 6 und den älteren Stufen von Num 22–24 belegt ist, konnte sich Gott des fremdländischen Sehers als Werkzeug zu Israels Heil bedienen. In der negativen Sicht, die schon in der Eselinnen-Episode anklingt, wird Bileam als Seher in ausländischen Diensten wahrgenommen. So gerät er in den Sog der Ablehnung des Fremdländischen. Nach Dtn 23 hat er daher Israel nur unfreiwillig gesegnet. In einer weiteren Entwicklungsstufe wird Bileam selbst schuldig: Er wird zum Wahrsager (Jos 13) oder zum Verführer, der Israel zum Abfall von Gott anstachelte (Num 31)<sup>(37)</sup>. Die Spannung zwischen Universalismus und Partikularismus konnte offenbar nicht mehr ausgehalten werden. Einfacher gesagt: Was nicht sein kann, nämlich daß ein Ausländer Gutes tut, das darf auch nicht sein. So bestimmen die Vorurteile der Leser die Auslegung der Bibel, und “die Rezeption der Quellen schafft die Quellen der Rezeption”<sup>(38)</sup>.

<sup>(37)</sup> Ohne dies hier ausdrücklich begründen zu können, gehe ich davon aus, daß es sich tatsächlich bei den Erwähnungen Bileams in Dtn 23 und Jos 24, später auch in Jos 13 und Num 31 um Bezugnahmen auf Num 22–24\* handelt, vgl. etwa die Darstellung von H. DONNER, “Balaam pseudopropheta”, *Beiträge zur alttestamentlichen Theologie*. Festschrift W. Zimmerli (Hrsg. H. DONNER u.a.) (Göttingen 1977) 112–123. Dagegen geht MÜLLER, “Probleme”, 58–60 davon aus, daß die unterschiedlichen Bewertungen Bileams unabhängig voneinander als Reflex auf die “berühmt-berüchtigte Gestalt” (S. 59) entstanden sind.

<sup>(38)</sup> H. BLUMENBERG, *Arbeit am Mythos* (Frankfurt 1979) 329; aufgenommen von M. MOXTER, “Die schönen Ungenauigkeiten. Hans Blumenbergs phänomenologische Variationen”, *Neue Rundschau* 109 (1998) 83–92; bes. 85. (Hinweis von R. Leonhardt, dem ich sehr für seine Bereitschaft danken möchte, diesen Aufsatz mit mir zu diskutieren).

## IV. Bileams Geschichte geht weiter

Mit dem bisherigen Ergebnis könnte man schließen. Doch die Geschichte Bileams geht weiter, zumindest seine Auslegungs- und Rezeptionsgeschichte. Dieser Fragestellung wird in der letzten Zeit immer mehr Bedeutung beigemessen, da man sich von ihr zusätzliche Verstehenshinweise und Deuteimpulse erwartet<sup>(39)</sup>. Bei der Fülle des Schrifttums, das aus der sog. zwischentestamentlichen Zeit, der Literatur der ersten Christen und des rabbinischen Judentums zur Verfügung steht, können hier nur einzelne Linien gezeigt werden<sup>(40)</sup>.

Der erste Zugang soll über das Schrifttum von Qumran geschehen, da dieses sprachlich und zeitlich am nächsten liegt. In einem kleinen Fragment, 4Q339, wird Bileam in einer Liste falscher Propheten genannt<sup>(41)</sup>. Von den einzelnen Propheten wird außer dem Namen nur mitgeteilt, daß sie "Propheten der Lüge, die in Israel auftraten", gewesen seien.

Wichtiger ist der Text 4Q175, die sog. Testimonia. Hier wird beinahe wörtlich Bileams 4. Orakel zitiert, in dem vom Kommen des Sterns aus Jakob die Rede ist. Der Text sammelt verschiedene Aussagen über das Kommen des Messias und hat wenig Interesse an den Personen, die er nennt. Doch offenbar wird hier kein Anstoß an Bileams Herkunft genommen. Die Weissagung selbst hat in Qumran offenbar eine größere Rolle gespielt, denn sie wird noch in CD 7,18-19<sup>(42)</sup> und 1QM 11,6-7. Zitiert<sup>(43)</sup>, allerdings ohne Nennung Bileams.

<sup>(39)</sup> S. dazu besonders K. KOCH, "Rezeptionsgeschichte als notwendige Voraussetzung einer biblischen Theologie – oder: Protestantische Verlegenheit angesichts der Geschichtlichkeit des Kanons", *Sola Scriptura. Das reformatorische Schriftprinzip in der säkularen Welt* (Hrsg. H.H. SCHMID – J. MEHLHAUSEN) (Gütersloh 1991) 143-160.

<sup>(40)</sup> Vgl. dazu auch J.T. GREENE, "The Balaam Figure and Type before, during, and after the Period of Pseudepigrapha", *JSPE* 8 (1991) 67-110. Allerdings ist m.E. das Operieren des Verfassers mit "Typen" der Bileam-Figur problematisch, da von den Texten nicht gedeckt. Vgl. etwa die bemühte Interpretation (97), daß der Eingang des 1. Hen nach Num 24,3-5 gestaltet sei (irrtümlich verweist Vf. auf Num 23,15-16). Ein ähnliches Urteil gilt m.E. auch für seine ausgeführte Studie: *Balaam and his Interpreters. A Hermeneutical History of the Balaam Traditions* (BJSt 244; Missoula 1992).

<sup>(41)</sup> Übersetzung bei J. MAIER, *Die Qumran-Essener: Die Texte vom Toten Meer*, Bd. II, Die Texte aus Höhle 4 (München – Basel 1995) 305.

<sup>(42)</sup> S. zur Aufnahme von Num 24 in CD J.J. COLLINS, *The Scepter and the Star. The Messiahs of the Dead Sea Scrolls and other Ancient Literature* (New York – London et al. 1995) 63-64.

<sup>(43)</sup> Zusätzlich wurde Num 24,8 — ebenfalls ohne Nennung Bileams — in

Die messianische Interpretation von Num 24,17 ist spätestens seit der Septuaginta-Übersetzung üblich geworden, wo es anders als im hebräischen Text heißt, daß nicht ein Stab aus Israel hervorgeht, sondern ein Mensch, der nicht Moabs Schläfen, sondern die Führer schlägt<sup>(44)</sup>. Damit war eine ganz neue Linie der Bileam-Interpretation eröffnet worden, für die LXX und 4Q175 nur die ersten greifbaren Tradenten sind. Ähnliches gilt für die ebenfalls vorchristlichen Testamente der Patriarchen, in denen erneut Num 24,17ff. ohne Nennung des Namens Bileams zitiert wird (TestJud 24,1)<sup>(45)</sup>. Damit kann eine neue Möglichkeit des Umgangs mit der Bileamtradition markiert werden: Seine Botschaft wird zwar wahrgenommen, der fremdländische Bote jedoch muß dahinter zurücktreten. Dies ist an der Numeri-Septuaginta besonders deutlich abzulesen, da Bileam in Num 22–24 (LXX) in ein wesentlich unfreundlicheres Licht gesetzt wird als im hebräischen Text<sup>(46)</sup>.

Die Richtigkeit der eben vorgetragenen Interpretation belegen auch die Werke des etwas später schreibenden Philo von Alexandrien<sup>(47)</sup>. Er müht sich, veranlaßt von Gen 12,3, mit der Frage ab, wie denn ein Fremder, der noch dazu die Israeliten zum Abfall bewegte, gleichzeitig Prophet sein kann. Das theologische Problem für Philo bestand darin, daß nach der Verheißung Gen 12,1-3 die gesegnet sind, die Israel segnen. Bileam aber scheint offenbar die Ausnahme von dieser Regel zu sein. Zwar erkennt Philo ausdrücklich an, daß Bileam "den ehrwürdigsten aller Gesänge" verfaßt habe (*De migr. Abr.* 113), doch weil er sich mit den Feinden verband, ist er gottlos und verflucht,

---

1QM XII,11 aufgenommen. Der Hinweis von GREENE, "Balaam Figure", 85, auch in 1QM VII,19-20 sei Num 24,17 aufgenommen worden, stimmt dagegen nicht (in 1QM sind in der Regel nicht mehr als die oberen 17 Zeilen einer Kolumne erhalten.)

<sup>(44)</sup> S. dazu vor allem die ausführlichen Hinweise zur Rezeption der LXX-Fassung bei G. DORIVAL, *La Bible d'Alexandrie*, IV. Les Nombres (Paris 1994) 135-142; 413-456. Vgl. auch M. RÖSEL, "Theo-Logie der griechischen Bibel", VT 48 (1998) 49-62; 61 (Lit.).

<sup>(45)</sup> Zur Datierung s. H.C. KEE, "The Testaments of The Twelve Patriarchs", *The OT Pseudepigrapha*, Vol. I, (ed. J.H. CHARLESWORTH) (Garden City 1983) 776-778, der das späte 2. vorchristl. Jh. als Entstehungszeit annimmt.

<sup>(46)</sup> Vgl. dazu J.W. WEVERS, *Notes on the Greek Text of Numbers* (SBL.SCSS 46; Atlanta 1998) xxix mit Belegen.

<sup>(47)</sup> Vgl. dazu etwa DONNER, "Balaam", 118-119; H. KARPP, "Bileam", RAC II (1954) 362-373. S. auch J.T. GREENE, "Balaam: Prophet, Diviner, and Priest in selected Ancient Israelite and Hellenistic Sources" (SBL Seminar Papers; Atlanta 1989) 57-106.

ἀσεβῆς καὶ ἐπάρατος<sup>(48)</sup>, seine Verfluchung also rechtens. Nach einer weiteren Darstellung des Geschehens ist ein prophetischer Geist über Bileam gekommen (*Vit. Mos* I, 277), der daraufhin Israel gegen seinen eigentlichen Willen segnet. Da verfällt er auf die Idee, daß die hübschen Frauen ja die Männer Israels zum Abfall von Gott verführen könnten. So ist Bileam doch noch in der Lage, seinen Auftrag zu erfüllen und zu Israels Ungunsten zu handeln (a.a.O., 294-300)<sup>(49)</sup>.

Etwa zur selben Zeit sieht der nur als Pseudo-Philo bekannte Schriftsteller Bileam als tragische Gestalt, die laut klagt, er habe sich verführen lassen (LAB 18). Doch der Verführer war diesmal Balak mit seinen Geschenken, daher werden die Worte Bileams leben, auch wenn er, der gesegnet hat, selbst nicht gesegnet wurde (LAB 18 § 12).

Dieselbe Tradition wird auch von Josephus, der seine *Antiquitates* am Ende des 1. Jh. n.Chr. schrieb, geboten (IV,6). Doch Josephus sieht Bileam als eigentlich unwissendes Werkzeug Gottes an (IV,6,3-5) und hält ausdrücklich fest, daß Mose dem Bileam große Ehre einräumt, indem er ihn in seiner Thora erwähnt. Negative Beurteilungen über Bileam finden sich bei Josephus nicht<sup>(50)</sup>. Das mag daran liegen, daß er sein Werk geschrieben hat, um das Judentum in den Augen der Römer positiv darzustellen<sup>(51)</sup>. Modern gesprochen: In einer multinationalen und multikulturellen Umgebung macht es sich nicht gut, Ausländer herabzuwürdigen<sup>(52)</sup>. Wie zweischneidig aber die Problematik für Josephus ist, läßt sich seinem Schlußsatz zur Bileam-Passage entnehmen: Beinahe resignierend stellt er fest: "doch mag jeder diese Sache betrachten, wie er will" (IV,6,13).

Im Neuen Testament schließlich erscheint Bileam an drei Stellen,

<sup>(48)</sup> Daher wird er, obwohl er Israel gesegnet hat, verflucht, auch wenn dies dem Wortlaut von Gen 12,3 zu widersprechen scheint (a.a.O., 109). Im folgenden wird dann Dtn 23,5 zur Interpretation von Num 22-24 herangezogen; hier sieht Philo die Bestätigung für die Verfluchung Bileams.

<sup>(49)</sup> Vgl. noch *De conf. ling.* 159, wo Philo den Namen Bileam von בל עמ ableitet: καὶ γὰρ μάταιος ἐρμηνεύται Βαλααμ; dort wird ebenfalls Bileam als Lügner dargestellt, der zwar in Worten fromme Wünsche aussprach, jedoch den eigentlichen Geist Gottes verfehlt: Bileam war also Wahrsager ohne Begeisterung.

<sup>(50)</sup> Vgl. K.G. KUHN, Βαλααμ, TWNT I, 521-523.

<sup>(51)</sup> Zum Problem s. CHR. GERBER, *Ein Bild des Judentums für Nichtjuden von Flavius Josephus*. Untersuchungen zu seiner Schrift *Contra Apionem* (AGJU 60; Tübingen 1997).

<sup>(52)</sup> S. dazu etwa B. HALPERN AMARU, "Land Theology in Josephus' Jewish Antiquities", *JQR* 71 (1981) 201-229; 211: "For Josephus the problem is ... a covenanted people limited to a covenanted land". Zu Bileam vgl. 224-227.

2 Petr 2,15; Jud 11; Offb 2,14, also ausschließlich in späten Schriften. Bileam wird als alttestamentlicher Typos der Irrlehrer dargestellt, die offenkundig die jungen Gemeinden bedrohen. Seine Herkunft spielt nun keine Rolle mehr. Das kann damit zusammenhängen, daß in der frühen Kirche nur noch ein Unterschied zwischen Gläubigen und Ungläubigen gesehen wurde, die nationale Herkunft aber keine wichtige Rolle mehr spielte.

Wenn Martin Hengel und Helmut Merkel recht haben, zeichnet sich möglicherweise bereits im NT eine Entwicklung ab, die später in der Alten Kirche wichtig wird: Die dem Stern folgenden Magier in Mt 2,1-12 wären dann nach dem Bilde Bileams gezeichnet, der, aus dem Osten kommend, das Heil Israels ansagt<sup>(53)</sup>. Damit wäre die messianische Interpretation der LXX ihrerseits wieder traditionsbildend geworden.

Die Beispiele ließen sich leicht vermehren<sup>(54)</sup>, doch die Hauptlinien sind deutlich geworden. Ich komme daher zu einem letzten Punkt, indem ich nochmals das resignierende Urteil des Josephus aufnehme:

#### V. Mag jeder diese Sache betrachten, wie er will?

Es konnte gezeigt werden, welchen Deutungen die Bileam-Figur im Laufe der Jahrhunderte ausgesetzt worden ist. Die Mehrzahl der antiken Ausleger hat sich zwar der negativen Bewertung des Sehers angeschlossen, doch es konnte auch gesehen werden, daß sich das Bild wieder zum Positiven wenden kann. Dies nun ist das eigentlich Interessante an der Gestalt dieses ersten "richtigen" Propheten der Bibel: Die Einbeziehung der Rezeptionsgeschichte der Kapitel Num 22–24 hat exemplarisch deutlich gemacht, daß dem eigentlichen Anliegen eines Textes Unrecht widerfahren kann, weil sich bestimmte Rahmenbedingungen des Verstehens geändert haben.

<sup>(53)</sup> M. HENGEL – H. MERKEL, "Die Magier aus dem Osten und die Flucht nach Ägypten (Mt 2) im Rahmen der antiken Religionsgeschichte und der Theologie des Matthäus", *Orientierung an Jesus: zur Theologie der Synoptiker*. Festschrift J. Schmid; (Hrsg. P. Hoffmann u.a.) (Freiburg et al. 1973) 139-169.

<sup>(54)</sup> Zur Rezeption im späteren Judentum vgl. P. SCHÄFER, "Bileam, II. Judentum", TRE VI (1980) 639-640 (Lit.), der besonders darauf hinweist, daß die wenigen positiven Aussagen über Bileam in recht frühen Texten zu finden sind, welche sich wohl an die griechisch-römische Umwelt richten. Vgl. außerdem G. VERMÈS, "Deux Traditions sur Balaam. Nombres XXII. 2-21 et ses interprétations midrashiques", *CSion* 9 (1955) 289-302; DERS., *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism*. Haggadic Studies (StPB 4; Leiden 1961) 127-177 zu Bileam. Zur Bileamgestalt in der Alten Kirche vgl. RAC und LCI s.v.

Dieses Urteil ist aber einzuschränken. Denn es ist auch deutlich geworden, daß es *den* ursprünglichen Text Num 22–24 eigentlich nicht gibt. Bereits die ältesten greifbaren biblischen Belege greifen ihrerseits auf vorhandene Traditionen zurück, die uns nur durch einen Zufallsfund aus dem jordanischen Deir ‘Alla bekannt sind. Erkennbar wurde auch, daß in der heutigen Endgestalt des Textes die fremdenfeindliche Bileamdeutung zumindest in der Eselin-Episode angelegt ist. Im Text durchaus latent enthaltene Aspekte können also unter veränderten Verstehensbedingungen das Gesamtverständnis in problematischem Ausmaß dominieren.

Die rezeptionsgeschichtliche Fragestellung eröffnet demnach vertiefte historische Einsichten in die Wirkung eines Textes und erschließt damit Aspekte von Sinn, die dem oder den ursprünglichen Autoren nicht bewußt waren. Damit gehört diese Methodik zur historischen Auslegung der Texte wie der folgenden Traditionsstufen hinzu; sie kann die späteren Verstehensversuche erklären und ggf. kritisieren<sup>(55)</sup>.

Im konkreten Falle von Num 22–24 ist aus heutiger Sicht klar, daß der Ausleger Anwalt des Textes und seines historisch erhobenen ursprünglichen Sinns sein sollte<sup>(56)</sup>. Es mag m.E. eben nicht jeder die Sache so betrachten, wie er will, auch wenn dies vielleicht zur Indifferenz des gegenwärtigen Zeitgeistes passen würde. Gerade das Thema der Fremdenfeindlichkeit macht ja deutlich, daß es Grenzen für die Beliebigkeit gibt. In diesem Sinne ist es gut, daß gerade der erste Prophet der Bibel ein Ausländer war, daß die Redaktoren des Pentateuch diese umstrittenen oder unbequemen Stellen nicht einfach gestrichen haben.

Es ist aber zugleich deutlich, daß über die Angemessenheit der Rezeption biblischer Texte nicht in isolierter Weise geurteilt werden kann, da eine solche Bewertung wiederum von anderen Faktoren, von anderen Rezeptions- und Traditionsvorgängen abhängig ist. So verstanden, nötigt die rezeptionsgeschichtliche Fragestellung auch zur Eröffnung eines Gesprächs über den angemessenen Deutehorizont der Texte und motiviert damit unter Umständen neue Rezeptionsstufen des Textes. So kann die exegetische Wissenschaft wieder eine Kommunikationsfähigkeit mit den anderen theologischen Disziplinen

<sup>(55)</sup> Mit KOCH, "Rezeptionsgeschichte", 150.

<sup>(56)</sup> Ähnlich, aber mit anderer Pointierung auch O. KAISER, "Zwischen Interpretationen und Überinterpretationen. Vom Ethos des Auslegers", *Variations herméneutiques* 6 (1997) 53–69.

erreichen, die sie durch eine zu einseitige Konzentration auf den mutmaßlichen ursprünglichen Sinn der Texte weithin verloren hat. Das Beispiel des fremden Sehers Bileam, dem die Götter die Augen geöffnet haben, kann folglich auch in dieser Hinsicht als augenöffnend angesehen werden.

Universität Rostock  
Theologische Fakultät  
18051 Rostock  
Deutschland

Martin RÖSEL

#### SUMMARY

The article attempts for the first time to trace the tradition of the seer Balaam (Num 22–24) with the aid of questions asked by reception history. In contradistinction to previous works it becomes clear in this way that the differing positive or negative presentation of the figure of Balaam in texts dependent on Num 22–24 can be explained above all by the attitude of the relevant recipient to the problem of the foreign in relation to the people of God. It becomes apparent that the method of reception history presents a significant supplement to exegetic tools, that makes possible fresh historical insights into the content and effect of biblical texts.



# ANIMADVERSIONES

## Abraham and His Offspring A Comparison of Galatians 5,1 with 3,13

These notes do not pretend to offer a full christology of Paul's letter to the Galatians. Nor do they claim to treat the figure of Abraham in Galatians (and Romans) exhaustively. In view of an often unnoticed similarity between Gal 5,1 and 3,13 the two verses will be compared and their respective contexts brought into that comparison. Just as after the Abraham passage of 3,6-12 Christ is mentioned in 3,13 quite unexpectedly, so also after 4,21-31, Paul's so-called allegory which deals with the wives and sons of Abraham, the sudden statement about Christ in 5,1 cannot but surprise the reader<sup>(1)</sup>. Although the word order differs, both vocabulary and content of parts of 3,13a and 5,1a are identical or at least similar: Χριστὸς ἡμᾶς ἐξηγόρησεν..., and ... ἡμᾶς Χριστὸς ἠλευθέρωσεν. In 5,2-6 Christ is mentioned three more times (see vv. 2.4 and 6)<sup>(2)</sup>; one can also point to the christological terms "grace" (v. 4) and "faith" (vv. 5 and 6). This attention to Christ is striking. One more introductory remark is called for. In this study the name "Abraham" is taken in a wider sense: not only Abraham himself, but also Sarah and Hagar, and equally Isaac and Ishmael ("Abraham had two sons, one by a slave and one by a free woman", 4,22).

### I. Those of Faith with Abraham who had Faith

Gal 3,1-14 forms the first pericope of the middle section of the letter, 3,1-5,12, a lengthy discussion concerning the Mosaic law and Christian freedom. Within that pericope there is the comparison with Abraham (3,6-9)<sup>(3)</sup>. After his invective question in verse 1 Paul speaks in verses 2-5 about the Galatians' experiences of the Spirit. Twice, in verse 2 and verse 5, Paul interpellates: did you receive and do you possess that Spirit thanks to works of the law or thanks to your hearing with faith? The answer is not given, but it is clear from the context that one has to choose the second alternative: through listening and believing. The comparison with Abraham then follows: he also "believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness" (v. 6; quoting Gen 15,6). Therefore, faith is surely a matter which is common to Abraham and the Galatians. But is this the only such

<sup>(1)</sup> On Gal 5,1 see A. OEPKE, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater* (THNT; Berlin <sup>1960</sup>) 117: "Der abgehackte Einsatz hat etwas Befremdliches".

<sup>(2)</sup> Cf. F. PASTOR RAMOS, *La libertad en la carta a los Gálatas*. Estudio exegético-teológico (Madrid 1977) 91: "la palabra 'Cristo' ... que no aparecía desde 4,19".

<sup>(3)</sup> This first paragraph is an edited version of sections of "Curse and Blessing: A Study of Galatians 3,10-14", J. LAMBRECHT, *Pauline Studies* (BETL 115; Leuven 1994) 271-298, cf. 277-279 and 287.

matter? What is the relationship between the Spirit experiences of the Galatians and the righteousness of Abraham? Both are guaranteed on the ground of faith. Are the two simply identical?

The conclusion in verse 7 has far-reaching implications: "Therefore know [probably an imperative] that it is the people of faith who are the children of Abraham". Why can this conclusion be drawn? According to Paul faith is so important that it constitutes the basis for a connection between Abraham and the others, a connection so strong that the believing Galatians can be called children of Abraham. Verse 6 quotes Gen 15,6, where Abraham's faith and righteousness are mentioned. In verse 8 a further citation is present: "All the Gentiles shall be blessed in you" (probably a conflation of Gen 18,8 and 12,3). It would be wrong to understand this blessing of all the Gentiles as a kind of reward for Abraham's faith; Paul's reflections run in another direction. He emphasizes the parallel between father and children, and thereby also between his righteousness and their blessing. It also becomes evident that for the Gentiles righteousness (v. 8a) and blessing (v. 8b) are identical. All this was planned by God; scripture foresaw it (προϋδοῦσα) and proclaimed it beforehand as gospel (προεγγερίσαστο) to Abraham.

In verse 9 one more conclusion is indicated: "So then, those who believe are blessed with Abraham who believed". Gentiles believe and are blessed together with Abraham who had faith. A small change in comparison with verse 8 is worthy of note: "in" Abraham becomes "with" Abraham. According to verse 9 Abraham not only believes (and not only receives the scriptural promise of the Gentiles' future blessing), but he himself is also blessed, like the Gentiles. For Abraham, too, righteousness is the same as blessing. Moreover, blessing refers to the Spirit. Although Paul could hardly say that Abraham already possessed the Spirit, through the two purpose clauses in verse 14 one understands that the blessing of Abraham is the promise of the Spirit. The second clause explains the first.

In Gal 3,1-14 Paul very much stresses the decisive importance of faith. By hearing with faith the Galatians have received and experienced the Spirit. This corresponds with scripture: Abraham is justified through faith; in him all nations, all the Gentiles will be blessed. Those who believe are his children; together with him they are blessed. One would think that faith is the only condition. Being blessed through faith is being justified through faith, and this implies the possession of the Spirit.

This reading, however, has not yet considered the sudden mention of Christ in verses 13-14. "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us" (v. 13a)(<sup>4</sup>), "in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles" (v. 14a). By these

(<sup>4</sup>) For an understanding of "us" (= Jews) in 3,13a as referring only to the Jewish Christians, see especially T.L. DONALDSON, "The 'Curse of the Law' and the Inclusion of the Gentiles: Galatians 3. 13-14", *NTS* 32 (1986) 94-112. So F.J. MATERA, *Galatians* (Sacra Pagina; Collegeville 1992) 120, writes: "The pronoun *hēmas* ('us') refers to Jewish believers who have lived under the curse of the Law. The redemption of the Jew precedes that of the Gentile". This interpretation, however, is not generally accepted. See, e.g., recently S.K. WILLIAMS, *Galatians* (Abingdon NT Comm.; Nashville 1997) 92: by us "Paul does not refer narrowly to himself and other Christian Jews".

verses the insight is forced upon the reader that the parallel between Abraham and the Gentiles is in the end not so simple. The sequence "faith-blessing" may have been possible for Abraham. Without the intervention of Christ, however, it remains impossible for his children. Previously there was blessing thanks to faith; now Christ must first redeem humanity from the curse of sin.

Yet it should be realized that this qualification is not completely correct, since for Paul redemption by Christ is certainly more than a first step, more than as it were a necessary condition before justification can take place. Redemption by Christ is the justification itself. The needed faith is specifically faith in Christ. In Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham comes upon the Gentiles (v. 14a) and through faith in Christ all Christians — Gentiles as well as Jews — receive the promise of the Spirit (v. 14b). One must, however, nuance these considerations once more. Strictly speaking, Abraham's faith too was not without a "christological" content. For he believed in God's promise which attained its realization and fulfillment precisely in Jesus Christ. This means that Abraham's faith and that of the Galatians may not be radically distinguished. Just as his children, Abraham too had to believe in God's new initiative of salvation in order to be justified. For Abraham that initiative was still a promise; for the Galatians it has become reality.

## II. Like Isaac, Children of the Promise

Galatians 3 is full of Old Testament quotations and references. It is understandable that Paul, writing this letter to a community consisting for the most part of Gentile Christians, introduces "a human example" in 3,15: "no one annuls even a man's will, or adds to it, once it has been ratified". But immediately afterwards, he resumes his reasoning with data taken from scripture. In 4,1-2 the profane humane reality, well known to the Galatians, is once more brought forward: "I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no better than a slave, though he is the owner of all the estate; but he is under guardians and trustees until the date set by the father". The application of this is worked out in 4,3-7. Paul's exclamation "how can you turn back again ..." is the center of 4,8-11, a brief passage in which he also expresses his fear: "I am afraid I have labored over you in vain" (v. 11). Then there follows in 4,12-20 a personal pleading in which Paul reminds the Galatians of their mutual loving relations. He also accuses his opponents: "they make much of you, but for no good purpose" (v. 17). This last pericope ends on a pathetic note: "I could wish to be present with you now and to change my tone, for I am perplexed about you" (v. 20).

### *Gal 4,21-31*

In Gal 4,21-31<sup>(\*)</sup> Paul returns to Scripture: "Tell me, you who desire to be under law, do you not hear the law?" "Law" is evidently used here

(\*) For our comment on the different passages of Galatians we may refer to the major classic commentaries. That of R.N. LONGENECKER, *Galatians* (Word; Dallas 1990), provides an extensive bibliography for each pericope.

in a double sense, referring first to the Torah as law and then to Torah as scripture. The formula "it is written" does not introduce a literal quotation. Paul summarizes several sections from Genesis, the stories of Hagar and Sarah and their sons (cf. Gen 16–25). Special attention is given to the status of the two mothers (slave and free) and to the way their respective children are born (according to the flesh and through promise). So a radical opposition prevails in the entire pericope.

The mothers are two covenants. Hagar is the covenant of Mount Sinai. It is the covenant of the law which entails lack of freedom, slavery. With this covenant Paul connects, in v. 25b, the present Jerusalem, which is in bondage with her children, the non-Christian Jews. The second part of the so-called allegory is not worked out. One is invited to supply: the other covenant is from Mount Zion; Sarah is Mount Zion, which corresponds to the Jerusalem above; she is in freedom with her children, the Christians (cf. v. 26). "Above" disrupts the expected temporal antithesis "present-future". The idea of a heavenly, already existent Jerusalem stems from apocalyptic Judaism. Paul, however, may also have chosen the new spatial image because he was convinced that the "future" is no longer completely future; it is somehow present now. That the two cities are seen as "mothers" (cf. vv. 25–26) can best be understood in connection with the two mothers, Hagar and Sarah.

The time factor complicates the allegory. It is not improbable that, in Paul's opinion, both covenants can be said to be existing in the history of Hagar and of Sarah. But the data concerning the Patriarchs point, above all, to two opposing realities: law (Sinai) and fulfilment of the promise, flesh and Spirit, slavery and freedom. The first covenant was inaugurated on Mount Sinai but it is still alive in the present Jerusalem; the new covenant, however, is only brought about by Jesus, now, in these days. The Hagar-line has three time moments: Hagar-Ishmael, law-Sinai, and present Jerusalem. The Sarah-line has only two such moments: Sarah-Isaac, and new covenant-Jerusalem above.

Twice, in verses 28 and 31, the vocative "brothers" occurs, twice also the term "children". The Galatians (cf. "you" in v. 28), Paul included (cf. "we are" in v. 31), are children of promise "after the manner of Isaac" who himself was a child of promise (cf. v. 23); they are children not of the slave girl but of the free woman. The two verses, 28 and 31, clearly form an "inclusio". Yet verse 31 also refers back to verses 21–22. There, "under law" suggests lack of freedom, bondage; there, too, the two terms *παιδίσκη* and *ἐλευθέρα* are used for the first time. From these literary data one is able to conclude that in 4,21–31 Paul wants to prove that the Galatians as Christians are free, free from the law. They alone, not the non-Christian Jews, are the heirs (cf. v. 30).

The allegory of Gal 4,21–31 stands out in its fierce language. Three data should be noted. (1) The allegorizing of the unfree Hagar as Mount Sinai must have been particularly odious for non-Christian Jews. It implies a clear depreciation of the giving of the law. This is confirmed by the opposition of the two covenants in which Sinai is said to bear children for slavery. (2) No less offensive is Paul's treatment of his contemporary fellow-Jews. The present Jerusalem, the mother of the non-Christian Jews,

is sharply criticized. The present Jerusalem corresponds to Mount Sinai (and the slave girl Hagar); the city is in bondage with her children; she persecutes the believers. She will be cast out and rejected; she will not have an inheritance. (3) The fact that Paul appropriates Sarah and Isaac, promise and heritage, Spirit and the Jerusalem above, i.e., all Israel's glory and her privileges for the church and thus also for the Gentile majority in that church, must certainly have been offensive to his fellow-Jews.

In Rom 9,6-13 Paul stresses the idea of God's free election. This applies to the call of Isaac and to that of Jacob. Not the children of the flesh are the children of God; only the children of the promise are reckoned as descendants (cf. v. 8). In Gal 4,21-31 it is underscored that Isaac is the son of Sarah through promise (cf. v. 23) and that he was born according to the Spirit (cf. v. 29). At the end of the pericope Paul very strongly affirms: "So, brothers, we are not children of the slave but of the free woman". Like Isaac we are children of the promise. Can one suppose that on the part of the Galatians nothing good or bad has been done and that God's purpose of election must continue, not because of works but because of his call (cf. Rom 9,11)? Since faith is not mentioned, one may have the impression that absolutely nothing is needed. The right descent meets with all the conditions: through promise, according to the Spirit. Christ does not enter on the scene; in fact, he is not even mentioned in Gal 4,21-31<sup>(6)</sup>. Yet just as in 3,13a Christ all at once appears in 5,1a: Τῇ ἐλευθερίᾳ ἡμᾶς Χριστὸς ἠλευθέρωσεν.

### Gal 5,1

We can assume that Paul has composed 5,1a still under the influence of what he had just written in 4,31, without referring to contemporary practices of slave emancipation<sup>(7)</sup>. Yet, as is well known, the problems regarding Gal 5,1 are legion. First of all, there are a number of variant readings. Furthermore, the question whether this verse still belongs to the allegory or can be seen as a new beginning<sup>(8)</sup> is not solved; therefore, many prefer a compromise: the verse constitutes a transition. This question is related to the other, namely whether the major parenetical part of Galatians begins with 5,1 or rather with 5,13. Much attention is also devoted to the connection between the two clauses, the indicative in verse 1a and the imperative in verse 1b. Commentators also ask how the dative at the beginning of the verse has to be taken: is it instrumental or is it the equivalent of a Hebrew absolute infinitive or, more probably, a dative of

<sup>(6)</sup> Cf. PASTOR RAMOS, *La Libertad*, 139: "Hasta este momento no había habido ninguna alusión a Cristo en toda la tipología".

<sup>(7)</sup> Paul does not seem to allude here to the Hellenistic sacral manumission nor to the Jewish redemption of slaves. F. MUSSNER, *Der Galaterbrief* (HTKNT; Freiburg – Basel – Wien 1974) 345, concludes his discussion as follows: "Die Formulierung ... macht ... den Eindruck, dass sie von Paulus ad hoc aus dem von ihm besonders in 4,31 Vorgelegten geschaffen worden ist".

<sup>(8)</sup> M.-J. LAGRANGE, *Épître aux Galates* (Paris 1918) 132-133, sees in 4,31 (with διό, ἀδελφοί,...) the beginning of a new pericope (4,31-5,12).

advantage? All these problems<sup>(9)</sup> may have caused the lack of attention given to the sudden appearance of Christ in 5,1a<sup>(10)</sup>.

A survey of parallel affirmations in the letter to the Galatians reveals both the kernel of Paul's thought and the possible variations and images<sup>(11)</sup>. In 1,4 it is said that Christ "gave himself (δόντος ἑαυτὸν) for our sins to deliver (ὅπως ἐξέλῃται) us from the present evil age"<sup>(12)</sup>. The verb used in 2,16 for that which is produced through or by faith in Christ (cf. 2,17: "in Christ") is, of course, δικαιοῦμαι. As stated already, in 3,13a Paul maintains that "Christ redeemed (ἐξαγοράσεν) us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us". One may, finally, also refer to 4,5 in which the same verb occurs: When the time has come, God sent his son "to redeem (ἵνα ... ἐξαγοράσῃ) those who were under the law". Consequently, that Christ gave himself for our sins can be expressed equally well by justification, by deliverance from the evil age, by redemption from the curse of the law, and by liberation, i.e. setting us free from the slavery of the law. In each case, Christ is the agent of these actions. On 5,1a E. Burton writes: "The sentence is, in fact, an epitome of the contention of the whole letter"<sup>(13)</sup>.

The similarities between 5,1a and 3,13a are very impressive: absence of a connecting particle and presence of "Christ", "us" and a verb in the aorist. In both clauses the verb indicates an act by Christ which saves us out of a negative situation. Further, just as "curse" in 3,13a takes up that term from 3,11, so also the "freedom" terminology links 5,1a with 4,30-31.26 and 22-23. One should, however, not keep silent about the differences. The metaphorical language is after all not the same: redemption from the curse of the law in 3,13a over against liberation (from slavery) in 5,1a. In 3,13a Christ is said to have become a curse for us; a similar statement which points to his vicarious death on the cross is missing in 5,1a. In 3,13a the position "Christ" at the beginning of the clause is very prominent; in 5,1a "Christ" comes only as the fourth word. One could be tempted to say that in 5,1a Christ is mentioned almost unintentionally. Yet the threefold repetition of "Christ" in 5,2-6 hardly occurs by accident; it betrays Paul's design.

<sup>(9)</sup> Cf. the discussion and choices in, e.g., LONGENECKER, *Galatians*, 220 and 223-225; PASTOR RAMOS, *La libertad*, 89-92.

<sup>(10)</sup> A. VANHOYE, *La lettera ai Galati*. Seconda parte, (Roma 1997) is an exception: the affirmation "corregge l'impressione che poteva lasciare la tipologia precedente, cioè che dobbiamo la nostra libertà a una astrazione, la seconda *diathēkē*, o a una realtà celeste collettiva, la Gerusalemme di lassù. Non è così! La nostra libertà la dobbiamo a un intervento di Cristo, intervento preciso, storico, espresso con un aoristo: *ἐλευθερώσεν*" (213). Regarding the verb, see also MUSSNER, *Galaterbrief*, 343: the aorist "schaut auf das historische Kreuzesgeschehen zurück" (with reference to the similar aorist in 3,13a).

<sup>(11)</sup> Cf. PASTOR RAMOS, *La libertad*, 235-242.

<sup>(12)</sup> At first sight Paul's reflection in 2,20: "... the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself (παράδόντος ἑαυτὸν) for me" appears to be very similar to the tradition in 1,4a. Yet G. BERENYI, "Gal 2,20: a Pre-Pauline or a Pauline Text?", *Bib* 65 (1984) 490-537, convincingly, it would seem, defends the Pauline character of 2,20. The author highlights three Pauline particularities: the title Son of God; the verb παραδίδωμι and the reflexive pronoun; the typical and original use of ἀγαπάω.

<sup>(13)</sup> E. DE WITT BURTON, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (ICC; Edinburgh 1921) 270.

The phrase "for freedom Christ has set us free" obtains most emphasis: by the position of τῇ ἐλευθερίᾳ in front of the clause and immediately after τῆς ἐλευθέρως at the end of the preceding verse (4,31)<sup>(14)</sup>; by the reiteration of the theme by means of the verb ἐλευθερώω in the same clause; by the reference back to the whole of 4,21-31 (cf. Sarah the free woman of whom the Galatians are the children, and the free Jerusalem above); by the repetition of the same idea in 5,13 ("for you, to freedom you were called, brothers"); and, not least of all, also by its negative counterpart, the slavery, in the imperatival clause of 5,1b. Although in 5,1a the noun "freedom" probably possesses a positive nuance, Paul sees the verb "setting free" in the first place negatively, i.e., as a being freed from the slavery of the Sinai covenant and the law. In 4,21 he addresses the Galatians who desire to be "under the law"<sup>(15)</sup>. In 5,1b he says to them "stand fast and do not submit again (πάλιν) to a yoke of slavery". In 4,9 he already expressed the same warning: "how can you turn back again (πάλιν) to the weak στοιχεῖα, whose slaves you want to be once more (πάλιν)?" He will stress this warning again in 5,7-11 and also at the very end of his letter in 6,12-13. This is the freedom which Paul has in Christ (2,4: τὴν ἐλευθερίαν ἡμῶν ἣν ἔχομεν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ: in Jerusalem the false brothers slipped in to spy out the freedom of Paul and Barnabas in order to bring them into bondage or slavery).

#### Gal 5,2-12

Whether or not Gal 5,1 structurally belongs to what follows, the first five conspicuous and authoritative words of 5,2 ("Ἰδε ἐγὼ Παῦλος λέγω ὑμῖν) mark, it would seem, a new beginning<sup>(16)</sup>. They function to emphasize Paul's worry and fear. In verses 1-6 the name Christ is present four times in an accumulated way. By itself this frequency somewhat distinguishes these verses from the next subdivision (vv. 7-12)<sup>(17)</sup>. Paul points to what he considers the great danger in Galatia: Christians desire to live as Jews (cf. 2,14). Circumcision is closely linked with the law and all its commandments (see 5,3-4). Two systems are diametrically opposed: justification by faith and so-called justification by the law. They are alternatives, indeed. If the Galatians are going to choose the law, then Christ will be of no advantage to them; they will be severed from him; they will have fallen away from grace (cf. vv. 2 and 4). Over against those supposedly judaizing Galatians Paul in verse 5 puts the authentically

<sup>(14)</sup> Cf. F. SIEFFERT, *Der Brief an die Galater* (KEK; Göttingen 1899) 297: the emphasis does not lie on Christ but on freedom which follows immediately on "the free woman" in 4,31.

<sup>(15)</sup> Cf. D. LÜHRMANN, *Der Brief an die Galater* (Zürcher Bibelkommentare; Zürich 1978) 80; H. SCHLIER, *Der Brief an die Galater* (KEK; Göttingen 1971) 229-230: "Freiheit vom Gesetz ... Freiheit von der Sünde ... Freiheit vom Tode". Yet: "Man wird nicht behaupten dürfen, dass Paulus diese Bestimmungen in dem Satz 5,1 alle gegenwärtig sind".

<sup>(16)</sup> Cf. MUSSNER, *Galaterbrief*, 344-345, for highlighting the authoritative character of these words.

<sup>(17)</sup> See, however, 5,11 with its mention of the cross (of Christ, cf. 6,12 and 14).

Christian "we" (ἡμεῖς). The Christian situation is one of eagerly expecting the final, eschatological righteousness, a life of being in Christ, of having a faith which works and expresses itself through love (cf. vv. 5-6).

In verses 7-12 Paul explicitly addresses the Galatians: "You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth?" (v. 7). He attacks and accuses the opponents. They cause trouble, they unsettle the Galatians. Paul announces their condemnation at the day of judgment; in an outburst, he even expresses the wish that they should mutilate themselves. Then, Paul once more refers to himself. No, he does not preach circumcision; he does not remove the scandal of the cross.

Apparently the whole of 5,2-12 is needed in order to explain correctly the freedom for which Christ has set us free. Paul's pleading, his severe attacks, his protestation and self-presentation: all his arguing testifies to the fear that the Galatians may listen to the "different gospel" (1,6) which ultimately means slavery and absence of freedom.

### III. Christ and Those of Christ: Abraham's Offspring

In between 3,1-14 and 4,21-5,12 there occurs the lengthy section 3,15-4,20, by no means a strictly unified text. No doubt, the rest of chapter three, with the mention of Abraham and his offspring (σπέρμα) in 3,16, as well as in 3,29, forms a unit: 3,15-29. What follows in 4,1-7 seems still to be connected with it, a kind of supplementary pericope. Because of Paul's airing of his fear for the Galatians and because of his warning against judaizing practices, the differing passages 4,1-11 and 4,12-20 can be considered together. The first subdivision 3,15-29 requires a careful reading in view of the presence of references to Abraham and Christ; Paul's type of reasoning is no longer the same here.

#### *Gal 3,15-29*

After 3,14 Paul writes "brothers" and announces a human example (κατὰ ἀνθρώπων λέγω): no one annuls a will (διαθήκην) which has been ratified, or adds to it (v. 15). The term διαθήκη is used again in v. 17, in the same sense of will or testament<sup>(18)</sup>. For Paul the reality of that will is the promise (or promises) made to Abraham. The noun ἐπαγγελία has already occurred in 3,14 ("the promise of the Spirit"). The promise-terminology reappears in vv. 16.17.18.19.21.22 and 29. It will become obvious that the content of the promise is Abraham's blessing, is the inheritance, life, righteousness and the Spirit.

With reference to Gen 13,15, verse 16 states that "the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring". In a curious way Paul modifies the originally collective meaning of "offspring" (σπέρμα). Since the term is in the singular, he claims that it points to one only, and this one is Christ. As said above, the sudden mention of Christ in 3,13 was unexpected. In 3,16 that identification of Abraham's offspring with Christ alone is not

(<sup>18</sup>) Cf. WILLIAMS, *Galatians*, 95-96.



only strange but utterly confusing. Moreover, the time period between Abraham and Christ would seem to be suppressed. Do we have, then, a phenomenon which should be compared with that of 3,13 and 5,1? Yet after the statement in 3,7 that only those of faith are the children of Abraham, Paul can hardly hold in 3,16 that unbelieving Jews continue to be offspring or descendants of Abraham. Sooner than one might have anticipated, from verse 17 onward, the time argument emerges in all clarity; its treatment makes Paul's reasoning in 3,15-29 different from that in 3,1-14 and 4,21-5,12. The law comes in. The lawgiving stands in between Abraham and Christ; it is later than the promise and earlier than the fulfillment. Yet, the law is powerless, its role is not positive.

The first negative feature of the law is a temporal one: the law came later, four hundred and thirty years after the promise. Therefore, it cannot nullify or destroy the promise (cf. v. 17). At the end of verse 19 Paul states that the law was ordained by angels through a mediator. "Mediator" here most probably points to Moses, not so much as an intermediary agent between two groups — angels and humans — but as the representative of the many angels<sup>(19)</sup>. In contrast God spoke the promise directly to Abraham, without angels and without an intermediary-representative. Again, law appears to be inferior. There is, moreover, a second temporal feature, equally negative, pointing not to the past but to the future. The function of the law is limited in time. Already in verse 19 it is said that the law will last (only) "till the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made". This temporal limitation is worked out very clearly in the somewhat simplistic survey of salvation history given in verses 22-25. Two periods of time are distinguished, that of the law and that of faith (or: that of sin and that of Christ). When the second arrives, the first disappears.

Promise and faith are so closely linked that in 3,18 promise even takes the place of faith in the opposition to the law: "for if the inheritance is by the law, it is no longer by promise" (cf. the end of v. 29: "heirs according to promise"). One notes the same radical tone as with faith. In diatribe style Paul asks in verse 21: "Is the law then against the promises of God?". "Certainly not" is the expected first emotional reaction. In fact, the real answer is not given afterwards; it must be supplied. Perhaps one may reconstruct it as follows: although the law is not against the promise and is holy, just and good (cf. Rom 7,12), yet through it sin works death (cf. Rom 7,13). What Paul eventually says after "certainly not" explains this answer: "for if a law had been given which could make alive, then

<sup>(19)</sup> H.D. BETZ, *Galatians* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia 1979) 171-172, e.g., retains the idea of mediating: "... as a go-between related to two parties, the mediator is defined merely in contrast with the oneness of God, that is, as the representative of a plurality. It is not at all necessary to identify this plurality as the angels in 3:19d, or as the people in the Sinai tradition" (171). Cf. also J.D.G. DUNN, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (Black's NT Comm.; London 1993) 191: "Paul was probably attempting a not very successful ... epigrammatic play-off between the thought of God's oneness and the fact that mediation implies more than one (between whom to mediate)". A. VANHOYE, "Un médiateur des anges en Ga 3,19-20", *Bib* 59 (1978) 403-411, defends the less likely position that an angel is the representative of the multitude of angels mentioned in v. 19.

righteousness would indeed be by the law" (v. 21). The negative stand regarding the law prevails, the same as in 3,10-12. Even if verse 19 does not mean that the law's function is to increase sin but to limit it, one should not consider such a role as constructive. This is obvious from what is stated in verse 23: "before faith came, we were confined under the law, kept under restraint until faith should be revealed". The time of the law is characterized by Paul as lacking in freedom (cf. v. 22: scripture consigned all things to sin). In verses 24-25 Paul understands the responsibility of the "custodian" (παιδαγωγός) probably not as pedagogic in a positive sense but only as restrictive, in any case as provisional. In these verses Paul employs the second person plural and thus addresses the Galatians in an emphatic way. Therefore, it would be un-Pauline to find in the law a preparation "unto Christ"<sup>(20)</sup>. The law is opposed to both the promise (past) and its fulfillment (future).

Promise itself points to fulfillment. In verse 16 the offspring of Abraham is strangely identified as being one person, Christ. In verse 19 the future coming of that offspring is mentioned again; verse 22 speaks of the future giving of what was promised and verse 23 of the coming of faith and its being revealed. Verse 24 points to the coming of Christ and verse 25, again, to the coming of faith. This frequency of remarks which look forward to Christ explodes, as it were, in verses 26-29. Already in verses 21-25 righteousness and life are mentioned. Yet in verses 26-29 one encounters the climax in expressions which all indicate the fulfillment of the promise: sons of God, faith in Christ, baptism and putting on of Christ, all one in Christ; and, by way of intended inclusion: "if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise" (v. 29). In verse 16 the uniqueness of Abraham's offspring was affirmed and underscored in a forced manner (cf. also v. 19); at the end of the passage, in verse 29, all believers are one in Christ and so they are collectively Abraham's offspring, his children (cf. v. 7). While in verse 23-25 the first person plural is used, in verses 26-29 Paul changes to the second person plural; he thus addresses the Galatians with great emphasis.

Twice, in 3,6-12 and in 4,21-31, the reader might be brought to the suspicion that belonging to Abraham or his family is sufficient. Abraham's children must believe, just as Abraham was one who believed; like Isaac, born according to the Spirit, they are children of the promise. Yet in 3,13 as well as in 5,1 Christ appears on the scene, without warning; a misunderstanding is no longer possible. The faith that is needed is faith in Christ crucified who redeemed us from the curse; the Spirit is the Spirit of Christ who has set us free from the law. In 3,15-29, however, nothing looks abrupt, nothing unexpected. Christ is explicitly present from verse 16 onward. His coming is repeatedly referred to in verses 19-25 and the fulfillment he brought is broadly depicted in verses 26-29. Paul's argumentation here by means of the promise to Abraham, the intervening law and the coming of Christ manifests his view of salvation history.

<sup>(20)</sup> The question remains, however, whether a positive nuance is completely absent in the clauses which contain ἄχρις οὗ (3,19), εἰς τὴν μέλλουσαν πίστιν (3,24) and εἰς Χριστόν (3,25).

*Gal 4,1-20*

One should consider Gal 4,1-7 as a sort of complement to 3,15-29. With λέγω δέ Paul introduces a second human example connected with the first (cf. 3,15): the child-heir is not better than a slave "until the date set by the father" (4,1-2). In the application of this example ("so with us", 4,3), it would seem that all Christians in Galatia have been slaves to elemental principles, either in their pagan past or kept in slavery under the Jewish law. In 4,4-7 Paul explains — broadly as in 3,26-29 — what has happened "when the fullness of time came": God sent his Son, born of a woman and born under the law, in order to redeem those under the law so that all might become children by adoption. God sent his Spirit into our hearts, crying "Abba, Father". Therefore, we are no longer slaves but children and heirs. Apparently the same salvation historical pattern of argument is present, be it without explicit mention of the promise: first the period of slavery and then the fullness of time with Christ. Yet the unfree condition before Christ is not only that of restriction under the law but also the pagan enslavement to beings "that are by nature no gods" (4,8).

In 4,8-11 Paul, once more in a strange way, compares and even identifies the pre-Christian condition of the Gentile believers with the judaizing lifestyle proposed by the opponents: you were in bondage to "no gods", how can you turn back "again" to the weak and poor elemental spirits? Why do you wish to enslave yourselves to them "again"? As it happens Paul twice uses the term πάλιν. In verse 11 he then complains: "I am afraid I have labored over you in vain".

The same fear can be felt in the emotional and pleading pericope which follows in 4,12-20. Paul reminds the Galatians of their previous loving attitude with regard to himself: "Have I become an enemy by telling you the truth" (v. 16). Paul continues to warn them against the dishonest "courting" of the opponents. From the preceding context one knows that they want to bring the Galatians "under the law" (cf. 4,21). It is a law which restricts and condemns, a law which is incapable of providing life (cf. 3,21).

\* \* \*

The reading of Gal 3,15-29 and 4,1-7 cannot but show us Paul's heavily christological emphasis. Christ is both the apex and center in the argument. One final question remains with regard to 3,13 and 5,1. While it cannot be denied that in both verses Paul, rather unexpectedly, brings in a most forceful statement about Christ, should one speak here of a conscious correction on the part of the author, or of an important complement? Neither of these options seems likely. In 3,13 and 5,1 Paul mentions Christ, it would seem, spontaneously, not as a correction<sup>(21)</sup> or complement, but out of the fullness of his personal conviction, out of his most profound vision of salvation history. Yet both 3,7-9 and 4,21-31 reveal to us how easily Paul is taken up, almost completely, in the presentation of Abraham and

(<sup>21</sup>) Cf. note 10.

his family. That Genesis material provides him not only with an illustration. A promise was made to Abraham and he believed God; this faith was reckoned to him as righteousness. According to Paul, Abraham's faith was already, by way of anticipation, Christian faith. Moreover, for Paul οἱ ἐκ πίστεως in 3,7 and 9 implicitly are believers in Christ. This also applies to 4,26. The children of ἡ ἄνω Ἱερουσαλήμ are free because they belong to Christ, even if in v. 26 this is not (yet) explicitly stated. God promised an inheritance to Abraham. Through their belonging to Christ Christians have become, not by law but according to that promise, the heirs (cf. 3,29) <sup>(22)</sup>.

Abraham's offspring is Christ; that offspring at the same time consists of all those who have faith in Christ <sup>(23)</sup>. Therefore, a seemingly brusque but easy transition from Abraham to Christ should not disturb the reader too much.

Via della Pilotta, 25  
00187 Rome - Italy

Jan LAMBRECHT, S.J.

#### SUMMARY

Just as after the Abraham passage of 3,6-12 Christ is mentioned in 3,13 quite unexpectedly, so also after 4,21-31, Paul's so-called allegory which deals with the wives and sons of Abraham, the sudden statement about Christ in 5,1 cannot but surprise the reader. Although the word order differs, both vocabulary and content of parts of 3,13a and 5,1a are identical or at least similar. Abraham's faith was already, by way of anticipation, Christian faith. Moreover, "those of faith" in 3,7 and 9 implicitly are believers in Christ. This also applies to 4,26. The children of "the Jerusalem above" are free because they belong to Christ, even if in v. 26 this is not (yet) explicitly stated. Therefore, a seemingly brusque transition from the Abraham text or the allegory to Christ should not disturb the reader too much.

<sup>(22)</sup> Cf. DUNN, *Galatians*, 208.

<sup>(23)</sup> Cf. WILLIAMS, *Galatians*, 92: Paul's "insistence on the incompatibility of faith and the Law are grounded in yet more fundamental convictions about the eschatological import of Jesus' death and resurrection".

## 1 Thessalonians 4,17: The Bringing in of the Lord or the Bringing in of the Faithful?

In 1 Thess 4,16-17 Paul states that at the Lord's coming from heaven, the faithful "will be caught up in the clouds ... to meet (εἰς ἀπάντησιν) the Lord in the air". In 1930 E. Peterson explained this as the "bringing in" (*die Einholung*) of the Lord: at the coming of the Lord from heaven, the faithful go up to bring him into their earthly city<sup>(1)</sup>. Paul's model here is the Hellenistic parousia, where the citizens go out to greet the royal visitor and joyfully bring him into the city<sup>(2)</sup>. With this explanation Peterson changed the traditional interpretation, according to which the believers go up to stay with the Lord in the heights or in heaven. Peterson's explanation, still followed by some exegetes today<sup>(3)</sup>, was challenged by J. Dupont<sup>(4)</sup> and others. We shall here re-examine this issue in the light of Pauline imagery in 1 Thess 4,13-18.

### 1. The Rise of the "Einholung" Idea

Peterson's explanation rests on the meaning of the phrase εἰς ἀπάντησιν used in 1 Thess 4,17 for the meeting between the faithful and the Lord. According to G. Luedemann<sup>(5)</sup>, it was K. Deissner<sup>(6)</sup> who first (1912) suggested that the purpose of the ἀπάντησις is "to receive the Lord at his coming from heaven and return with him to earth". The new element in this explanation is the return to earth, which is not explicit in 1 Thess 4,17.

But Deissner was not the first to suggest this interpretation. That year J.E. Frame, independently of Deissner, wrote in this connection about the "official welcome of a newly arrived dignitary"<sup>(7)</sup>. And both Deissner and Frame cited earlier scholarly opinions anticipating this view; Frame referred to J.H. Moulton (1906)<sup>(8)</sup>, and Deissner to E. Teichmann

(<sup>1</sup>) E. PETERSON, "Die Einholung des Kyrios", *ZST* 7 (1929/30) 682-702.

(<sup>2</sup>) PETERSON, "Einholung", 693 n. 3, stresses that this is a friendly visitation, not the triumphal entry of a victorious ruler.

(<sup>3</sup>) This view has been recently expressed by T. HOLTZ, *Der erste Brief an die Thessalonicher* (EKKNT 13; Zürich 1986) 203; G. LUEDEMANN, *Paul the Apostle. Studies in Chronology* (Philadelphia 1984) 226 n. 123, and by H. MERKLEIN, "Der Theologe als Prophet. Zur Funktion prophetischen Redens im theologischen Diskurs des Paulus", *NTS* 38 (1992) 402-429, esp. 412.

(<sup>4</sup>) J. DUPONT, *ΣΥΝ ΧΡΙΣΤΩ. L'Union avec le Christ suivant saint Paul* (Louvain - Paris 1952).

(<sup>5</sup>) LUEDEMANN, *Paul the Apostle*, 226.

(<sup>6</sup>) K. DEISSNER, *Auferstehungshoffnung und Pneumagedanke bei Paulus* (Leipzig 1912) 15-16.

(<sup>7</sup>) J.E. FRAME, *The Epistles of St. Paul to the Thessalonians* (ICC; Edinburgh 1912) 177. Frame, however, did not envision a return to the earth. According to him, after their encounter with the Lord in the air, the faithful go to stay with Jesus in heaven (176).

(<sup>8</sup>) J.H. MOULTON, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek* (Edinburgh 1906) 14.

(1896)<sup>(9)</sup>. Teichmann in fact employed the verb *einholen* ("to bring in", "go to meet", "go to get") which Peterson in 1929 used for the faithful's bringing of the Lord to their earthly abode<sup>(10)</sup>. Teichmann noted that he thereby departed from the view held by O. Pfleiderer (1887)<sup>(11)</sup>, R. Kabisch (1893)<sup>(12)</sup>, and W. Beyschlag (1895)<sup>(13)</sup>, according to which the faithful go up to stay with the Lord for ever<sup>(14)</sup>.

Deissner's explanation was taken up by A. Deissmann and E. Peterson. Peterson adopted Deissner's word *Einholung*. But whereas Teichmann and Deissner still derived their interpretations from 1 Thess 4,16-17 and other Pauline texts, Deissmann and Peterson drew on the Hellenistic parousias. According to them, the *Einholung* motif in 1 Thess 4,17 is a replica of Hellenistic parousias. Recent discoveries of inscriptions, papyri, and ostraca from 200 B.C. to 150 A.D. prove that Hellenistic and Roman parousias were a well-known event in the world in which the early Christians existed. In the fourth edition of his book *Licht vom Osten* (1923), Deissmann suggested that the early Church borrowed the imagery of the Lord's coming from Hellenistic parousias. According to him, "The best interpretation of the Primitive Christian hope of the Parousia is the old Advent text, 'Behold, thy King cometh unto thee'"<sup>(15)</sup>.

Deissmann based his argument mainly on the word *παρουσία*, which has a Hellenistic overtone and does not appear in the Hebrew bible, the Septuagint or Jewish apocalyptic writings. He took this word to be a technical term. According to him, "from the Ptolemaic period down into the 2nd cent. A.D. we are able to trace the word in the East as a technical expression for the arrival or the visit of the king or the emperor"<sup>(16)</sup>.

<sup>(9)</sup> E. TEICHMANN, *Die paulinischen Vorstellungen von Auferstehung und Gericht* (Freiburg – Tübingen 1896) 35.

<sup>(10)</sup> TEICHMANN, *Die paulinischen Vorstellungen*, 22, states: "All the faithful ... go to meet him, *holen ihn ein* and escort him during the last leg of his journey" (my translation). According to Teichmann (25), the cloud then brings the faithful to the earth.

<sup>(11)</sup> O. PFLEIDERER, *Primitive Christianity*. Its Writings and Teachings in their Historical Connections (London 1906-1911; reprint: Clifton, N. J. 1965) I, 130-131. German original: *Das Urchristentum, seine Schriften und Lehren* (Berlin 1887). According to Pfleiderer, "The essential point in these representations ... is, moreover, nothing else than the simple certainty that we shall be constantly in the presence of the Lord".

<sup>(12)</sup> R. KABISCH, *Die Eschatologie des Paulus in ihren Zusammenhängen mit dem Gesamtbegriff des Paulinismus* (Göttingen 1893).

<sup>(13)</sup> W. BEYSLAG, *New Testament Theology* (Edinburgh 1895) II, 260. Commenting on 1 Thess 4,16-17, Beyschlag observes: "He who comes from heaven does not seem to set His foot on earth; for if He did so He would there gather His faithful around him. But the meaning cannot be that He would come only half-way to meet them, in order to take them with Him into His heaven, for then His 'coming down from heaven' would be nothing more for the earth than a momentary spectacle".

<sup>(14)</sup> BEYSLAG, *Theology*, 261, suggests that the Lord will from then on reign from his throne and subjugate the *archai*, *exousiai*, and *dynameis*.

<sup>(15)</sup> A. DEISSMANN, *Licht vom Osten*. Das Neue Testament und die neuentdeckten Texte der hellenistisch-römischen Welt (Tübingen 1923); ID., *Light from the Ancient East*. The New Testament Illustrated by Recently Discovered Texts of the Graeco-Roman World (London 1927).

<sup>(16)</sup> As evidence of this, DEISSMANN, *Light from the Ancient East*, 368, refers to the Flinders Petrie Papyrus II. 39e from the 3rd cent. B.C., to the Tebtunis Papyri from

Deissmann also suggested a resemblance of imagery between Hellenistic parousias and Paul's descriptions of Christ's coming. Describing the Flinders Petrie Papyrus, he states:

This papyrus supplies an exceptionally fine background of contrast to the figurative language of St. Paul, in which *Parousia* (or *Epiphany*, "appearing") and "Crown" occur together. While the sovereigns of this world expect at their parousia a costly crown for themselves, 'at the parousia of our Lord Jesus' the apostles will wear a crown — the 'crown of glory' (1 Thess 2,19) won by his work among the churches, or the 'crown of righteousness' which the Lord will give to him and to all that have loved His appearing (2 Tim 4,8)<sup>(17)</sup>.

According to this, the resemblance is not perfect: there is a shift in imagery. In correspondence with the Hellenistic model, the crown of Gold here should be a feature of Christ the Lord. But Paul speaks of himself: the faithful are his "crown of glory". Deissmann can only establish a "background of contrast". The uniform Hellenistic civilisation, according to Deissmann, provided many examples of parousias, such as the coming of king Saitapharnes<sup>(18)</sup>, or of the healer god Asclepius at Epidaurus<sup>(19)</sup>, or of the visits of Roman emperors. When Nero visited Corinth and Patras, these cities struck coins to commemorate the glorious event and indicate the beginning of a new era<sup>(20)</sup>. Similarly, the cities visited by Hadrian minted coins in commemoration of that event.

The word *παρουσία*, Deissmann notes, had been employed in Egypt and in Asia Minor, while in Greece the synonym *ἐπιδημία* was preferred<sup>(21)</sup>. This, however, weakens his argument that based the congruence of imagery solely on the common word *παρουσία*. The argument is further weakened by the fact that Paul employed the term *παρουσία* as often for his own visit or the visit of his co-workers as for the coming of the Lord<sup>(22)</sup>. Besides, the term *παρουσία* was employed in Hellenistic and Roman<sup>(23)</sup> sources for visits other than the emperor's. The term *παρουσία* was hence used in the technical sense neither by the apostle nor in Hellenistic or Roman sources<sup>(24)</sup>.

In his article "Die Einholung des Kyrios", Peterson marshalled

---

around 113 B.C., to a bill from the 2nd c. B.C. dealing with the parousia of the king, and to an ostrakon from Thebes, also from the 2nd c. B.C.

<sup>(17)</sup> DEISSMANN, *Light from the Ancient East*, 369.

<sup>(18)</sup> 3rd c. B.C. at Olbia.

<sup>(19)</sup> Polybius mentions the parousia of King Antiochus the Great.

<sup>(20)</sup> DEISSMANN, *Light from the Ancient East*, 372.

<sup>(21)</sup> Ibid.

<sup>(22)</sup> Paul employs the "parousia" for the Lord's coming in: 1 Cor 15,23; 1 Thess 2,19; 3,13; 4,15; 5,23 (2 Thess 2,1.8). He uses the "parousia" for the advent of another person in: 1 Cor 16,17; 2 Cor 7,6. 7; 10,10; Phil 1,26; 2,12 (2 Thess 2,9).

<sup>(23)</sup> The Latin equivalent for the *παρουσία* is *adventus*. On the Hellenistic usage of parousia, see H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford 1966) 1343; A. OEPKE, "παρουσία", *TDNT* V, 857-871.

<sup>(24)</sup> The crown motif in the Flinders Petrie papyrus and in 1 Thess 2,19 has a different function, as Deissmann himself admitted.

additional evidence from Hellenistic and Roman antiquity that in 1 Thess 4,13-18 Paul imagined the Lord's coming along the model of a Hellenistic parousia<sup>(25)</sup>. According to Peterson, 4,17 is to be understood as follows: "The Kyrios, i. e. Christ, is coming down from heaven.... But while he is still on his way from heaven to earth, Christians, those still alive as well as the deceased, go up on the clouds to receive him. They meet him in the ἀήρ, i. e. in the layer of air which belongs to the earth"<sup>(26)</sup>.

Peterson focused on the encounter, referred to here as the ἀπάντησις, which he understood to be a technical term in the parousia descriptions. Here the ἀπάντησις does not indicate a casual meeting, but rather "the legal, civic usage, according to which the people induct high personages (especially kings and their representatives) at their παρουσία according to a prescribed ceremony"<sup>(27)</sup>. The ἀπάντησις here indicates an official welcome or reception. According to Peterson, "The concept of *Einholung* implies that one leaves one's home city and meets the honored visitor some distance from the city in order to accompany him into their city"<sup>(28)</sup>. The fact that Paul did not find it necessary to explain this welcoming reception (ἀπάντησις) to his readers suggests that he presumed they knew its specific meaning<sup>(29)</sup>. Peterson concedes, however, that this meaning of returning with the Lord is only weakly indicated in 1 Thess 4,18 with "and we will always be with the Lord", καὶ οὕτως πάντοτε σὺν κυρίῳ ἔσομεθα. According to him, the ἀήρ, the air, where the meeting occurs, was in antiquity thought to be within the sphere of the earth; hence going up here does not mean leaving the earth. It is rather like going out of the city to another place on earth. Hence the faithful really never leave the earth. Going up in Paul's presentation in 1 Thess 4,17 is like going out in Hellenistic parousias.

Peterson noted the occurrence in these documents of the terms συναντῶν, ἀπαντῶν, ὑπαντῶν, ὑπάντησις, and ὑπαπάντησις. According to him, these are synonyms indicating that, in antiquity, the induction was expressed in a variety of ways. In fact, the words ἀπάντησις and ὑπάντησις are often employed interchangeably, as the textual vacillation in 1 Thess 4,17 indicates<sup>(30)</sup>.

<sup>(25)</sup> PETERSON, "Einholung". See also E. PETERSON, "ἀπάντησις", *TWNT* I, 380 (TDNT I, 380-381). From the inscriptions, Peterson cites the following: *The Decree for Attalos from Pergamum*, *The Epheben Inscription from Attica* (c. 100/99), *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, *the Decree of Cyzicum*, and *The Inscription from Marathon about Herod Atticus*.

From the literary documents Peterson quotes Polybius (5.26.8; 5.43.3; 5.63.7; 10.5.6; 16.25.3), Diodorus Siculus (17.59.3; 33.28a), Dionysius Halicarnasus (*Ant. Rom.* 2.60; 9.58), Josephus (*J. W.* 7.68-71; 7.100-103; *Ant.* 11.327), Plutarch (*Pomp.* 40; *Cic.* 43), Herodian (8.7), Dio Cassius (63.4; 74.1; 77.22), Philostratus (*Vit. Apol.* 5.27), Eusebius (*Vita Constantini* 1.39), Gregory Nazianzen (*In Laudem S. Athanasii* 29), Alexander Romanus (*Historia Alexandri Magni*), Marcus Diaconus (*Vit. Porph.* 58), the Acts of the Council of Ephesus, and the ritual described by Constantinus Porphyrogensis (*De Cerimoniis* 1.96) for the reception of a Church dignitary. From Latin sources he quotes Livy (31.14), Cicero (*Ep. ad Atticum* 8.16.2), Ammianus Marcellinus (22.9) and Pliny the Younger.

<sup>(26)</sup> PETERSON, "Einholung", 682 (my translation).

<sup>(27)</sup> Ibid., 682.

<sup>(28)</sup> Ibid., 693-694.

<sup>(29)</sup> Ibid., 682-683.

<sup>(30)</sup> Ibid., 693.



In Hellenistic Parousias, only persons of high standing, emperors or kings or their high representatives, were in this fashion brought into the city. It was a strictly regulated ceremonial event: people, lined up according to rank and occupation, processed out of their city toward the approaching visitors and his retinue, greeted him, and then solemnly led him into their city. It was customary for the people to wear on that occasion white robes and garlands. In addition, the whole city was decorated for the event and festivities were scheduled: incense was burned, sweet-smelling oil was poured, the temple was open, and an offering was made to the gods. At his coming, the ruler would show himself magnanimous and bestow upon the citizens certain privileges and liberties. The city would long after remember this magnificent and splendid event and look on it as the beginning of a new epoch<sup>(31)</sup>. According to Peterson, since both Paul and his audience in Thessalonica were familiar with this ceremony, they naturally imagined the parousia of Christ to be like this. When Christ the ruler will come from heaven and approach their "civitas terrena", the faithful will go up on the clouds to meet him in the air and bring him joyfully into their earthly "city"<sup>(32)</sup>.

The focus of Peterson's depiction is more on the faithful than on the Lord coming down from heaven. It is the faithful who are active, in congruence with Hellenistic parousias. They seize the initiative and go forth to meet the Lord. This, however, causes problems with the passive voice of ἀπαύξω, which Paul employs here. ἀπαυγισόμεθα means "we shall be taken up". It is also doubtful that the faithful in Thessalonica regarded going up from the earth to be like going out of the city. In addition, it poorly agrees with 1 Thess 4,14, which states that God will through Jesus bring the deceased faithful with him (into his presence).

Peterson's explanation of the parousia was enthusiastically received. In the wake of his article, other scholars began to interpret the coming of Christ described in 1 Thess 4,13-18 as a replica of Hellenistic imperial parousias<sup>(33)</sup>.

<sup>(31)</sup> PETERSON, "Einholung", 694-696.

<sup>(32)</sup> Ibid., 698.

<sup>(33)</sup> K. DEISSNER, "parusie", *RGG* IV, 978-981; F. PRAT, *The Theology of Saint Paul* (Westminster 1953) II, 370; B. RIGAUD, *L'Antéchrist et l'opposition au Royaume messianique dans l'Ancien et le Nouveau Testament* (Universitas Catholica Lovaniensis Diss. II, 24; Gembloux 1932) 263-264; J. CHAINE, "Parousie", *DTC* II, 2044-2045; F. AMIOT, *L'Enseignement de saint Paul* (EBib 2; Paris 1938) 199; E. STAUFFER, *New Testament Theology* (London 1955) 216; L. CERFAUX, *Christ in the Theology of St. Paul* (New York 1959) 32-44; M. MEINERTZ, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (Bonn 1950) 215; P. BENOIT, "L'Évangile selon Saint Matthieu", *La Sainte Bible traduite en français sous la direction de l'École Biblique de Jérusalem* (Paris 1961) 1321; M. DIBELIUS, *An die Thessalonicher I-II. An die Philipper* (HNT 11; Tübingen 1937) 14-16. For further literature, see DUPONT, *L'Union*, 48 n. 1.

Against this interpretation are: W. BOUSSET, *Kyrios Christos. Geschichte des Christusglaubens von den Anfängen des Christentums bis Irenaeus* (FRLANT 21; Göttingen 1913) 298; G. MILLIGAN, *St. Paul's Epistles to the Thessalonians* (London 1908) 61; DUPONT, *L'Union*, 73; F. AMIOT, *Épître aux Galates. Épîtres aux Thessaloniens* (VS 14; Paris 1946) 333; E.-B. ALLO, *Première Épître aux Corinthiens* (Paris 1934) 451; C. A. WANAMAKER, *Commentary on 1 & 2 Thessalonians* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids 1990) 174; J. PLEVNIK, "The Taking Up of the Faithful and the Resurrection of the Dead in 1 Thessalonians 4,13-18", *CBQ* 46 (1984) 274-283.

## 2. The Influence of the Sinai Pericope, Exod 19,10-18, on 1Thess 4,16-17

Peterson's interpretation was the established view for over twenty years. But in 1952 J. Dupont<sup>(34)</sup> challenged it. Dupont distinguished between the text in 1 Thess 4,13-18 and the tradition behind it. He conceded that there may be some Hellenistic influence on the tradition, but Paul's own depiction in 1 Thess 4,13-18 no longer reflects it. In fact, the vocabulary and imagery in 4,16-17 bear striking resemblance to the Sinai theophany described in Ex 19,10-18 and Deut 33,2<sup>(35)</sup>. The phrase εἰς ἀπάντησιν, crucial to Peterson's interpretation, is in Dupont's opinion no more a technical term than παρουσία. It is not a term specific to imperial parousias, but a common expression occurring, together with its synonyms, 129 times in the LXX, where it usually translates the Hebrew לִקְרָא. The Septuagint expressed this encounter with the same accusative construction εἰς ἀπάντησιν, as did Paul in 1 Thess 4,17 and the secular accounts of Hellenistic parousias. In some of these instances (cf. Gen 14,17; 2 Kgs 19,16.21) it corresponds closely to the usage found in Hellenistic parousias. But, according to Dupont, this only means that the Hebrews, as well, were aware of this custom: the citizens went out toward the approaching potentate in order to greet him and accompany him joyfully to their dwelling place. Although Dupont points out that the bringing in is not always implied in this expression, he agrees with Peterson that 1 Thess 4,17 implies it<sup>(36)</sup>. In the New Testament, εἰς ἀπάντησιν is not reserved for the parousia of the Lord, but is employed in a variety of circumstances and ways<sup>(37)</sup>. Dupont concluded that εἰς ἀπάντησιν in 1 Thess 4,17 need not reflect the ceremonies of the Hellenistic parousias.

According to Dupont, the imagery in 1 Thess 4,16-17 is Jewish apocalyptic and scriptural rather than Hellenistic. It resembles the depiction of the Sinai theophany of LXX Exod 19,10-18, which involves Yahweh's coming down from heaven on Mount Sinai and the people coming up the mountain to meet him. This passage has the following motifs in common with 1 Thess 4,13-18: the trumpets, the cloud, the descent of the Lord, and the approach of the people to the place of meeting (εἰς συνάντησιν) on the mountain. This grandiose theophany was actively inspiring Jewish apocalyptic writings in the time of Paul. The Sinai text, however, does not contain the *Einholung* notion essential to Peterson's explanation: the people do not go to bring the Lord to their place<sup>(38)</sup>.

After Dupont's critique the arguments of Deissmann and Peterson could no longer be maintained. While L. Cerfaux in his book *Christ in the*

<sup>(34)</sup> DUPONT, *L'Union*, 48 n. 1.

<sup>(35)</sup> *Ibid.*, 69, 97.

<sup>(36)</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

<sup>(37)</sup> It occurs in Matt 25,6, Acts 28,15 and 1 Thess 4,17. The verb ἀπαντάω is found in Mark 14,13 and Luke 17,12.

<sup>(38)</sup> Dupont's observations concerning εἰς ἀπάντησιν were later confirmed by H.-A. WILCKE, *Das Problem eines Messianischen Zwischenreiches bei Paulus* (ATANT 51; Zürich 1967) 142-147, who adduced additional instances of the Septuagintal usage of this phrase, and by P. SIBER, *Mit Christus Leben*. Eine Studie zur paulinischen Auferstehungshoffnung (ATANT 61; Zürich 1971) 31.

*Theology of Saint Paul* (1959)<sup>(39)</sup> still followed Peterson's explanation, in his next book *The Christian in the Theology of St. Paul* (1967)<sup>(40)</sup> he no longer does it. In his commentary on the Thessalonian epistles, B. Rigaux mentions the solutions of Peterson and Dupont, but leaves open the possibility of influences from both Hellenistic parousias and the Sinai pericope<sup>(41)</sup>.

But Dupont's dependence on the Sinai pericope was strained. E. Best pointed out the different function of the motifs common to the Sinai pericope and to 1 Thess 4,13-18. He stated: "But in this passage the clouds are not a vehicle but a covering, the word for 'meet' (at 19,7) is not the simple form as in Paul but a compound, the people 'ascend' and are not *snatched up*, and in Paul there is nothing comparable to the giving of The Commandments to which Exod 19,16-25 serves as an introduction; in addition clouds and trumpets are common apocalyptic images"<sup>(42)</sup>.

And, as Dupont himself has stated, in the Sinai episode God is not brought by the people into their camp.

### 3. *The Meaning in 1 Thess 4,13-18*

According to Peterson, Hellenistic parousias provided Paul with the image of bringing in (*Einholung*) which he employed in 1 Thess 4,16-18. As we have seen, his argument for it is weak, since the expression ἀπάντησις or εἰς ἀπάντησιν is neither limited to Hellenistic parousias nor does it always suggest the bringing in<sup>(43)</sup>. Moreover, the context and the imagery of 1 Thess 4,13-18 do not support this explanation. For instance, the being-snatched-up (ἀρπαγησόμεθα), and the cloud motif do not easily fit into that scenery. In Peterson's interpretation, the people's going up on a cloud is equivalent to the citizens' going out of their city, which is rather strained.

Other theologically significant differences exist between the two representations. While in Hellenistic parousias the focus is on the ceremonial reception of the visitor by the people, in 1 Thess 4,13-18 the

<sup>(39)</sup> L. CERFAUX, *Christ in the Theology of Saint Paul* (New York 1959) 32-44.

<sup>(40)</sup> L. CERFAUX, *The Christian in the Theology of St. Paul* (New York 1967) 159-161.

<sup>(41)</sup> B. RIGAU, *Saint Paul. Les Épîtres aux Thessaloniens* (Paris – Gembloux 1956) 547-548, suggests that both sources could have influenced Paul. Peterson's explanation has continued to exert its influence to this day. The following commentaries agree more or less with Peterson's explanation: W. MUNDLE, *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (ed. C. BROWN) (Grand Rapids 1975) 324-325; I.H. MARSHALL, *1 and 2 Thessalonians* (NCB; Grand Rapids 1983) 131; HOLTZ, *1 Thessalonicher*, 203. See also the following articles: P. NEPPER-CHRISTENSEN, "Das verborgene Herrnwort", *ST* 19 (1965) 136-154; H. KOESTER, "From Paul's Eschatology to the Apocalyptic Schemata of 2 Thessalonians", *The Thessalonian Correspondence* (ed. R.F. COLLINS) (BETL 87; Leuven 1990) 441-459, esp. 447; MERKLEIN, "Prophet", 412; M.R. COSBY, "Hellenistic Formal Receptions and Paul's Use of Αἰανθήσις in 1 Thessalonians 4,17", *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 4 (1994) 15-34.

<sup>(42)</sup> E. BEST, *A Commentary on the First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians* (London 1972) 199; but Best's objection that the Exodus text employs a compound form works also against Hellenistic sources.

<sup>(43)</sup> The verb ἀπαντάω in Mark 14,13 and Luke 17,12 does not mean this.

focus is on the Lord himself, on the power and the glory of his coming, and on the effect of his coming on the dead and the living faithful. Here the Lord is active, while the people are passive: the dead believers are raised, and then all the faithful are taken up by a cloud. A. von Dobschütz has appropriately described this as the *Abholung* of the faithful<sup>(44)</sup>: the faithful are taken away.

In addition, Peterson's explanation does not agree with 4,14, which states that God will bring the faithful with Jesus, ὁ θεὸς τοὺς κοιμηθέντας διὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἄξει σὺν αὐτῷ. No matter how we interpret the phrase διὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, whether agreeing with κοιμηθέντας or with ἄξει, this sentence states that God will employ Christ to bring in the deceased. The destination, of course, is not explicitly stated by the text, but the best guess would be that the faithful are taken into God's presence; 2 Cor 4,14, which offers the best parallel to this text, suggests this. In this passage Paul, defending his own share in the ultimate fulfilment, asserts to the Corinthians: "We know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus, and will bring us with you (into his presence, παραστήσει σὺν ὑμῖν)". Here everybody is brought near to God.

#### 4. The Taking Up

The imagery of Hellenistic parousias does not explain why in 1 Thess 4,16-17 Paul insists that the deceased faithful will be first raised, then taken up. I have argued previously that Paul is here thinking in terms of an assumption-exaltation. An indication of this is the function of the cloud in 1 Thess 4,16-17, the verb ἀπαγησόμεθα<sup>(45)</sup>, and the destination implied in v. 14 and in 2 Cor 4,14.

The cloud here is not the vehicle for the Lord's descent from heaven, as in the synoptic portrayals of the parousia, nor is it the shroud of God, as in theophanies. It serves, rather, as a transport for the human beings that are taken up from their place on earth to a place in the beyond, as is the case in the portrayals of assumptions in both Jewish and pagan sources. The cloud motif is employed when a *living* human being is taken up<sup>(46)</sup>. For that person, life on earth has thereby come to an end, and a new and higher life has begun<sup>(47)</sup>. This is precisely the difficulty that the Thessalonians had: how can the dead be taken up<sup>(48)</sup>? Therefore Paul states in 1 Thess 4,16-17 that the dead are first brought to life, then they are

<sup>(44)</sup> A. VON DOBSCHÜTZ, *Die Thessalonicher-Briefe* (MeyerK; Göttingen 1909) 192.

<sup>(45)</sup> The verb ἀπαράω occurs in the NT 14 times, either in the sense of "to snatch from", "to rob" (Matt 12,29), or "to take up". In the latter sense it occurs in Acts 8,29; 2 Cor 12,2,4; 1 Thess 4,17 and Rev 12,5. In every instance the person is taken into heaven.

<sup>(46)</sup> When in the assumption depictions the spirit alone is rapt, as in a trance, the cloud motif is not employed.

<sup>(47)</sup> See on this G. LOHFINK, *Die Himmelfahrt Jesu. Untersuchungen zu den Himmelfahrts- und Erhöhungstexten bei Lukas* (SANT 26; Munich 1971) 32-78. Cf. PLEVNIK, "The Taking up", 280.

<sup>(48)</sup> The tradition also states that the one to be taken up may first be brought to life and then taken up (Rev 11,11-12).

taken up. That they are taken up is implied in the assertion that "those alive will be taken up with them". This also explains the peculiar presentation of the resurrection here as a restoration of life, which is in tension with 1 Cor 15,50-56.

The grief in the Thessalonian community, Paul's insistence that the dead are raised first, the presentation of the "resurrection" as a restoration of life, and the taking up by a cloud can be best explained on the supposition that the apostle had earlier depicted the parousia to the Thessalonians in these terms. It was this presentation that had later on caused the anxiety in the community, when some among them died. In his response, Paul shows how, in that scenario, the deceased faithful will nevertheless share in the taking up: they will first be restored to life.

This presentation thus differs from that of 1 Cor 15,50-56, where the apostle emphasizes that the deceased and the living will be changed at the Lord's coming. But the two are not incongruent. In 1 Cor 15,50-56 Paul states: "We will not all die, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet ... the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed" (vv. 52-53). The emphasis here is on change. It has been customary to read 1 Thess 4,13-18 in the light of 1 Cor 15,50-56 by disregarding the context and the thrust of Paul's arguments in these places. But in 1 Thess 4,13-18 Paul's presentation is centered on the parousia that involves the taking up<sup>(49)</sup>. It addresses the grief in the community at the realization that the deceased faithful cannot participate in the taking up. Having affirmed in v. 14 that the deceased will be taken up by the power of God, Paul then in vv. 16-17 shows how this will happen: they will first be brought to life, then they will be taken up.

In 1 Cor 15,50-56 Paul indicates that, at the resurrection, they will not retain the present body: the deceased will be raised imperishable, and the living will put on incorruptibility. Those entering the kingdom of God (v. 50) must become like the heavenly man (v. 49), free of corruption and death. Paul insists that the dead will be raised imperishable, and the living will be transformed.

But this is not irreconcilable with 1 Thess 4,13-18. The taking up, as employed in 1 Thess 4,17, implies that the believers thereby leave the present mode of life on earth and are given the exalted Christ's mode of existence. This is a permanent change of life, not a mere change of location. It is an exaltation.

In conclusion, we observe that Peterson's image of *Einholung* does not fit the imagery and the theology of 1 Thess 4,13-18. A closer attention to the imagery and structure of 1 Thess 4,13-18 discloses that Paul's source of inspiration was Jewish rather than Hellenistic. This is also suggested by the expression "day of the Lord", used elsewhere by the apostle for the coming of the Lord. Hellenistic parousias depict the citizens making the royal visitor welcome in their city, whereas 1 Thess 4,13-18 depicts the

<sup>(49)</sup> The parousia is the main referent in this epistle, as the numerous allusions to it indicate (1 Thess 1,3,10; 2,19; 3,13; 4,13-5,11; 5,23).

effect of the Lord's coming on them. According to it, the deceased faithful are raised from the dead so that they can be taken up. The living faithful will be then be taken up with them.

Regis College  
15 St. Mary Street  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4Y 2R5

Joseph PLEVNIK, S.J.

#### SUMMARY

The image of *bringing in*, which, in dependence on Hellenistic parousia depictions, denotes the bringing in of the Lord at his coming, does not fit the imagery and the theology of Paul in 1 Thess 4,13-18. Hellenistic parousias depict the citizens making the royal visitor welcome in their city, whereas 1 Thess 4,13-18 depicts the effect of the Lord's coming on them. The faithful are raised; the faithful are taken up. 1 Thess 4,13-18 really depicts the bringing in of the faithful, not of the Lord. The implication is that they do not return to the earth, but stay with the Lord forever.

## Jesus as Anointed and Healing Son of David in the Gospel of Matthew<sup>(1)</sup>

In this paper I will examine Jesus' anointing and healing and their relation to his title Son of David in the Gospel of Matthew. As will be shown, these three aspects of Jesus' ministry are of special importance to Matthew and he emphasizes and relates them so as to represent Jesus as the uniquely anointed "Christ", the Son of David who has come to heal<sup>(2)</sup>.

### 1. Anointing

First, a general examination of anointing in Matthew. In his redaction of Mark<sup>(3)</sup>, Matthew has retained the story of Jesus' anointing at Bethany (Matt 26,6-13//Mark 14,3-9). He has indeed followed Mark's account closely<sup>(4)</sup>, agreeing with Mark that it is Jesus' head that is anointed<sup>(5)</sup>, retaining the more explicitly royal motif that is typical in Matthew<sup>(6)</sup>. Elsewhere in the Gospel, he has omitted the other two references to anointing in Mark (Mark 6,13; 16,1), but he has also added one of his own (Matt 6,17). What are the effects of Matthew's redaction? By his omission of Mark 6,13, "And they [the disciples] cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many that were sick and healed them"<sup>(7)</sup>, Matthew has removed any reference to the disciples' anointing anyone. In Matthew's Gospel, unlike Mark's, no one besides Jesus is ever anointed. In his redaction of Mark 16,1, Matthew has also omitted any reference to the women intending to anoint Jesus' body. Matthew 28,1 only states that they come to see Jesus'

(1) An earlier version of this paper was originally read at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, March 12, 1998.

(2) Cf. D.C. DULING, "The Therapeutic Son of David: An Element in Matthew's Christological Apologetic", *NTS* 24 (1978) 392-410; for a more recent version of his work from a social scientific perspective and with up-to-date bibliography, see D.C. DULING, "Matthew's Plurisignificant 'Son of David' in Social Science Perspective: Kinship, Kingship, Magic, and Miracle", *BTB* 22 (1992) 99-116.

(3) I refer to the author of the first Gospel as Matthew throughout without implication or speculation as to his identity. I follow the same convention with regards to Mark and Luke. Throughout I also assume the two-source hypothesis, or Matthew's use of Mark and Q. For a recent defense of this in the case of Matthew, see W.D. DAVIES – D.C. ALLISON, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew*, 3 vols., (Edinburgh 1988) I, 97-121.

(4) Sixty-five of the 109 words in Matt 26,6-13 are taken over from Mark 14,3-9 (60%). Cf. F.V. FILSON, *A Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Matthew* (London 1960) 333: "...their accounts agree on all important points"; F.W. BEARE, *The Gospel according to Matthew* (San Francisco 1981) 504: "Matthew keeps closely to the Markan form of the story, making only minor changes of wording".

(5) Cf. Luke 7,36-50; John 12,1-8.

(6) 1 Sam 10,1; 2 Kgs 9,6; see also DAVIES – ALLISON, *Matthew*, III, 442; D.J. HARRINGTON, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Sacra Pagina 1; Collegeville 1991) 362.

(7) Cf. Matt 10,1; on the connection of anointing with healing, cf. also Luke 10,34; Jas 5,14.

tomb: "Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the sepulchre". In Matthew's story, even the characters themselves seem to know that Jesus has already been anointed and does not need to be so a second time<sup>(8)</sup>. These seemingly minor omissions result in Jesus' anointing being doubly unique in Matthew: only Jesus is anointed, and he is anointed only once.

But what of the reference to anointing that Matthew has added in the Sermon on the Mount, "...when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face" (Matt 6,17)? Because of his omissions, this is the only other reference to anointing in Matthew's Gospel. With this addition Matthew has given a further implication to Jesus' anointing at Bethany and has shown Jesus fulfilling his own commandment: his anointing is not only in preparation for his burial, but it is also in preparation for his fast that will follow the Passover meal (Matt 26,29 // Mark 14,25). Jesus had taught his followers to anoint themselves and "not be dismal looking" (Matt 6,16) when fasting, and he does the same, going to the cross and the grave anointed and without the outer signs of suffering. Further, the many ironies of the Passion narrative are accentuated with the detail of the anointing: acts such as anointing and washing that are usually preparatory to feasting and celebration are here made preparatory to fasting and death<sup>(9)</sup>. With the reader's privileged perspective of having read Matt 6,17, she knows, just as Jesus does, what the woman's actions indicate<sup>(10)</sup>.

## 2. Healing

Now let us look at Matthew's accounts of Jesus' healing activities. First, Matthew seems much more interested in presenting Jesus as healing in general, rather than in presenting him in the more specific role of exorcist<sup>(11)</sup>, which is much more typical of Mark's portrayal of Jesus<sup>(12)</sup>. There are nearly three times as many occurrences of the verbs *θεραπεύω* and *ἰάομαι* in Matthew than in Mark, with Matthew showing a strong

(8) Cf. DAVIES – ALLISON, *Matthew*, III, 664: "Mark's explanation - to anoint Jesus (Mk 16.1) - is missing. Did our evangelist believe that 26.12 stood in tension with Mark's account?"

(9) The main irony in the plot at this point is the contrast between the treachery of the chief priests and Judas and the love of the unnamed woman: cf. E. SCHWEIZER, *The Good News according to Matthew* (Atlanta 1975) 487; R.H. GUNDRY, *Matthew. A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art* (Grand Rapids 1982) 519-523. On the irony of Matt 6,17, see DAVIES – ALLISON, *Matthew*, I, 619.

(10) Cf. HARRINGTON, *Matthew*, 364: "From these many ironies associated with institutions and characters Jesus emerges as knowing what is happening and why it must happen. And the reader of Matthew's passion account is able to share Jesus' privileged perspective on the events of the passion".

(11) The two formal types, healing and exorcism, are clearly very similar, but seem distinguishable: see T.A. BURKILL, "The Notion of Miracle with Special Reference to St. Mark's Gospel", *ZNW* 50 (1959) 33-48, esp. 43-44; G. THEISSEN, *The Miracle Stories of the Early Christian Tradition* (Edinburgh – Philadelphia 1983) 85-90; R. LATOURELLE, *The Miracles of Jesus and the Theology of Miracles* (New York 1988) 243-245.

(12) On Mark's focus on Jesus' exorcisms and power over the demons, see H. C. KEE, "Aretalogy and Gospel", *JBL* 92 (1973) 402-422, esp. 416-419. On Matthew's redaction of Mark in these pericopae, see DULING, "Therapeutic Son of David", 393-399.



preference for the former<sup>(13)</sup>. More significant than quantity, however, is the way in which Matthew redacts Markan material to depict Jesus primarily as a healer<sup>(14)</sup>. Matthew redacts his Markan material in three ways: he minimizes the exorcistic elements in some stories, making them into more generalized healings; he turns accounts of Jesus' teaching into accounts of his healing; and he summarizes Jesus' ministry as one of "teaching and healing" rather than "teaching and casting out demons".

In two stories, Matthew has substantially curtailed the demonic and magical elements found in Mark. Instead of Mark's graphic story of the deaf mute (Mark 7,31-37), with its magical overtones in Jesus' use of saliva, Matthew has made a generalized summary of Jesus' healing ministry, "And great crowds came to him, bringing with them the lame, the maimed, the blind, the mute, and many others, and they put them at his feet, and he healed them" (Matt 15,30)<sup>(15)</sup>. In the healing of the epileptic boy (Mark 9,14-29 // Matt 17,14-21), Matthew has omitted almost all the details that make the story an exorcism, leaving out any reference to the "unclean spirit" or Jesus' words of command to it. Matthew's version reads simply, "And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was healed (ἐθεραπεύθη) instantly" (Matt 17,18)<sup>(16)</sup>.

Redacting exorcisms into healings, while it may be significant, is a relatively minor change, as the two types of stories are formally so similar. But Matthew also changes several of Mark's accounts of Jesus' teaching into accounts of his healing. The first of these seems the most logical in context, and therefore least indicative of Matthew's particular interests: both Matthew and Luke thought it a strange reaction that after Jesus "was moved with compassion" (ἐσπλαγχνίσθη) for the crowds, he would then proceed "to teach" them (Mark 6,34)<sup>(17)</sup>. Both redactors turn the story into one of general healing: "As he went ashore he saw a great throng; and he had compassion on them, and healed their sick" (Matt 14,14; cf. Luke 9,11). The second instance, however, seems a more deliberate substitution: instead of Mark's "... crowds gathered to him... and... he taught them" (Mark 10,1), Matthew has "... large crowds followed him, and he healed them" (Matt 19,2)<sup>(18)</sup>.

<sup>(13)</sup> Matthew has θεραπεύω 16 times (Matt 4,23.24; 8,7.16; 9,35; 10,1.8; 12,10.15.22; 14,14; 15,30; 17,16.18; 19,2; 21,14), while Mark has it only 6 times (Mark 1,34; 3,2.10.15; 6,5.13); Matthew has ἰάομαι four times (Matt 8,8.13; 13,15; 15,28), while Mark has it only once (Mark 5,29).

<sup>(14)</sup> The situation is, as usual, much harder to determine in relation to Q. Of the four "changes in Q" listed by DULING, "Therapeutic Son of David", 398, n. 6, one is really from Mark (Matt 17,18 // Mark 9,26-27); and in two θεραπεύω may be original to Q (Matt 8,7 // Luke 7,3; Matt 10,1 // Luke 10,1, but cf. Luke 9,1). In the Beelzebul controversy (Matt 12,22 // Luke 11,14), it does seem that Matthew has substituted his preferred term θεραπεύω for ἐκβάλλω.

<sup>(15)</sup> On Matthew's use of Mark here, see R. BULTMANN, *History of the Synoptic Tradition* (rev. ed.; Peabody, MA 1963) 213; GUNDRY, *Matthew*, 317-319; DAVIES - ALLISON, *Matthew*, II, 561-562.

<sup>(16)</sup> Cf. DULING, "Therapeutic Son of David", 402.

<sup>(17)</sup> Cf. GUNDRY, *Matthew*, 290-291; DAVIES - ALLISON, *Matthew*, II, 479. However, Luke does omit any reference to Jesus' emotions here, as usual in his Gospel: see K. PAFFENROTH, *Story of Jesus according to L* (JSNTSS 147; Sheffield 1997) 107, with references.

<sup>(18)</sup> Cf. GUNDRY, *Matthew*, 376; DAVIES - ALLISON, *Matthew*, III, 7.

Unlike the previous example, nothing in the context would seem to make healing more appropriate than teaching at this point. If anything, the fact that this is the introduction to a controversy story (Matt 19,3-12 // Mark 10,2-12) would seem to make Mark's context the more sensible. Third, and perhaps most importantly because of its placement, both Mark and Luke have Jesus teach in the temple after casting out the money-changers there (Mark 11,17 // Luke 19,47). Matthew, on the other hand, omits any reference to Jesus' teaching and instead says that "the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them" (Matt 21,14). It is the last time that Jesus heals in the Gospel<sup>(19)</sup>. Jesus' time in the temple has been transformed by Matthew into the climax of Jesus' healing ministry<sup>(20)</sup>.

Matthew shows the same interests and tendencies in his redactions of Mark's summaries. When Mark summarizes Jesus' ministry, he focuses on the two activities of preaching and exorcisms: "And he went throughout all Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out demons" (Mark 1,39). These two activities are also what the disciples are empowered to do: "And he appointed twelve to be with him, and to be sent out to preach, and have authority to cast out demons" (Mark 3,14-15). For Mark, the ministry of Jesus and his disciples is best characterized by their preaching and exorcistic activities, though Mark is much more detailed in recounting the latter<sup>(21)</sup>. As for Matthew, he has obviously greatly expanded Jesus' teaching activities in his five large discourses or sermons<sup>(22)</sup>, and while he retains (with the modifications noted above) Mark's depiction of Jesus as an exorcist, when Matthew summarizes Jesus' activities, he adds or substitutes references to Jesus' more general healing activity, as in his parallel to Mark 1,39: "And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people" (Matt 4,23). This is at the conclusion of the first narrative block in Matthew, and he concludes the second narrative block with an almost identical summary: "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every infirmity" (Matt 9,35)<sup>(23)</sup>. And in his summary of the disciples' activity, Matthew also refers to their healing activity: "And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every infirmity" (Matt 10,1).

<sup>(19)</sup> See DAVIES – ALLISON, *Matthew*, III, 140.

<sup>(20)</sup> See J.D. KINGSBURY, "The Title 'Son of David' in Matthew's Gospel", *JBL* 95 (1976) 591-602, esp. 598: "Matthew intends this scene (21:14-16), the final time in the Gospel that Jesus acts in his capacity as the Son of David, to 'sum up' in a climactic way his ministry of healing". (See below on Son of David.) Cf. DAVIES – ALLISON, *Matthew*, III, 140.

<sup>(21)</sup> Cf. DULING, "Therapeutic Son of David", 393: "It is possible from observing Mark's summaries to propose that the Second Evangelist has a twofold view of Jesus' activity: he preaches and he casts out demons".

<sup>(22)</sup> Matthew's chapters 5-7, 10, 13, 18, 23-25. For finer distinctions, see DAVIES – ALLISON, *Matthew*, I, 58-72.

<sup>(23)</sup> Cf. DULING, "Therapeutic Son of David", 394-395, who takes them as an *inclusio* around the discourse and narrative block of chapters 5-9.

In his redaction of Markan material, Matthew has consistently shown that he is more interested in depicting Jesus as a healer than is Mark: he has made some exorcisms into more generalized healings, he has depicted Jesus as healing rather than teaching several times, and he has summarized Jesus' ministry as one of "teaching and healing" rather than "teaching and casting out demons".

There is one final, but all-important observation to be made about Jesus' healing in Matthew. As observed above, Matthew omits Mark 6,13, thereby making Jesus the only person anointed in Matthew's Gospel. Just as importantly, however, this omission removes any reference to anyone other than Jesus healing in Matthew's Gospel<sup>(24)</sup>. Both Mark and Luke include some mention of the disciples' healing mission being (at least partially) successful: "[the disciples] anointed with oil many that were sick and healed them" (Mark 6,13), "they departed and went through the villages... healing everywhere" (Luke 9,6). In Matthew, Jesus is not only uniquely anointed, he is also uniquely capable of healing, or indeed of performing any powerful deed, since Matthew has also omitted the story of the strange (but successful) exorcist (Mark 9,38-41 // Luke 9,49-50). Through seemingly minor omissions, Matthew has made Jesus' status and power unique in several important ways.

### 3. *Son of David*

As for the title Son of David, its prominence in Matthew has often been noted, and the exact meaning he attaches to it has often been explored<sup>(25)</sup>. Both placement and frequency point to the title's importance for Matthew. He begins his Gospel with, "Jesus Christ, Son of David" (Matt 1,1), and the title occurs nine times in Matthew<sup>(26)</sup>, versus only three in Mark<sup>(27)</sup>. The most obvious implications of the title are those associated with David (and therefore his son) as king<sup>(28)</sup>. David was anointed king (1 Sam 16,1-13) and now Matthew presents Jesus as the "Christ", the anointed. Promises were made to David regarding his progeny (2 Sam 7,12-16), promises that Matthew sees fulfilled in David's (adopted) son Jesus<sup>(29)</sup>.

<sup>(24)</sup> The omission is seldom noted, though cf. GUNDRY, *Matthew*, 190, who notes it not for the uniqueness of Jesus' healing, but for the focus on Jesus' teaching rather than on the disciples' obeying: "Matthew omits even a cursory comment of this sort and will never make up the omission. For him the actuality of the disciples' mission pales before Jesus' instructions".

<sup>(25)</sup> Besides the articles by DULING and KINGSBURY already cited, see e.g. J. M. GIBBS, "Purpose and Pattern in Matthew's Use of the Title 'Son of David'", *NTS* 10 (1964) 446-464; J. M. JONES, "Subverting the Textuality of Davidic Messianism: Matthew's Presentation of the Genealogy and the Davidic Title", *CBQ* 56 (1994) 256-272. For other titles in Matthew, see B. MALINA - J. NEYREY, *Calling Jesus Names. The Social Value of Labels in Matthew* (New Haven 1988).

<sup>(26)</sup> Matt 1,1.20; 9,27; 12,23; 15,22; 20,30-31; 21,9.15.

<sup>(27)</sup> Mark 10,47-48; 12,35.

<sup>(28)</sup> Cf. FILSON, *Matthew*, 52.

<sup>(29)</sup> On Jesus' adoption, see R.E. BROWN, *The Birth of the Messiah* (Philadelphia 1977) 138-143; JONES, "Genealogy and the Davidic Title", 259-261. The Davidic line is traced through Joseph, who is also referred to as a Son of David at Matt 1,20.

Jesus' status as "anointed", his royal lineage, and his fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy are all clearly implied by Matthew's use of the title Son of David at the beginning of his Gospel.

But the exact significance Matthew attaches to the term in the rest of his Gospel is much less clear. Every occurrence of the title outside of Matthew's first chapter is in the context of one of Jesus' healings: both sets of blind men and the Canaanite woman all call on Jesus as Son of David when they ask him for healing (Matt 9,27; 15,22; 20,30-31), the people ask if Jesus is the Son of David after he heals the blind and mute man (Matt 12,23), and Jesus is acclaimed by the crowds and the children as Son of David before and after he occupies the temple to conduct his healing there (Matt 21,9.15). Matthew clearly associates the title with Jesus as healer<sup>(30)</sup>, but why?<sup>(31)</sup>.

A reference to David (or his son) could be used to evoke a number of different associations<sup>(32)</sup>: the greatest king of Israel, as noted above; a charismatic leader who has the authority to disregard established rules when they do not suit him (Matt 12,1-8); the humbled penitent of 2 Sam 12,1-25; the great poet of the Psalms, wherein he shows his passion for the Lord (cf. 2 Sam 6,14), but which also show him to be capable of predicting the future like a prophet (Matt 22,43)<sup>(33)</sup>. None of these, with the possible exception of the last, would carry any association with healing abilities<sup>(34)</sup>, but since David was associated with the prophets' predictive abilities and not with the miracle-working abilities of prophets like Elijah or Elisha, the necessary connection would not seem to be found there.

If Son of David refers to David's actual son Solomon, then this too would carry several different associations: the last great king of a united Israel; the great sage and patron of wisdom (Matt 12,42)<sup>(35)</sup>; a powerful exorcist and magician<sup>(36)</sup>. Again, only the last of these could carry any association with healing; but since we have seen that Matthew deliberately redacts his material to present Jesus more as a healer than as an exorcist, a connection with Solomon would also not seem to be the answer to why he is called Son of David in his capacity as healer.

The answer would seem to lie in Matthew's last two stories of Jesus as Son of David and in the Old Testament stories they evoke. As noted,

<sup>(30)</sup> But cf. B. CHILTON, "Jesus ben David: reflections on the *Davidsohnfrage*", *JSNT* 14 (1982) 88-112, who believes that Matthew's emphasis is genealogical throughout.

<sup>(31)</sup> Cf. D. HILL, *The Gospel of Matthew* (NCB; Grand Rapids – London 1981) 215: "...miraculous healing was not associated in Judaism with the Davidic Messiah".

<sup>(32)</sup> Cf. DULING, "Plurisignificant 'Son of David'", 109.

<sup>(33)</sup> See J.A. FITZMYER, "David, 'Being Therefore a Prophet...' (Acts 2:30)", *CBQ* 34 (1972) 332-339.

<sup>(34)</sup> Though in later tradition, based in part on Biblical traditions, the king would be associated with healing: see M. BLOCH, *The Royal Touch: Sacred Monarchy and Scrofula in England and France* (London – Montreal 1973). (I have Dr. Abigail Firey to thank for this observation.)

<sup>(35)</sup> Probably the most prevalent association for him, and the one most important to Q: see K. PAFFENROTH, "The Testing of the Sage: 1 Kings 10:1-13 and Q 4:1-13", *The Expository Times* 107 (1996) 142-143.

<sup>(36)</sup> See D.C. DULING, "Solomon, Exorcism, and Son of David", *HTR* 68 (1975) 235-252; DAVIES – ALLISON, *Matthew*, I, 157.

Jesus is twice acclaimed Son of David as he practices his final, climactic healing ministry within the temple<sup>(37)</sup>. In particular, he is said to heal “the blind and the lame” in the temple (Matt 21,14). When David conquered Jerusalem, he mockingly called his enemies “the lame and the blind”: “David had said on that day, ‘Whoever would strike down the Jebusites, let him get up the water shaft to attack the lame and the blind, those whom David hates’. Therefore it is said, ‘The blind and the lame shall not come into the house’” (2 Sam 5,8). The Son of David as healer is contrasted, not compared, with his father David: David was a powerful warrior who killed the figuratively blind and lame and excluded them from his “house”; his son Jesus is a powerful healer who cures the literally blind and lame within his “house”, the temple<sup>(38)</sup>.

Similarly, in the last pericope dealing with Jesus’ status as Son of David (Matt 22,41-46)<sup>(39)</sup>, Jesus explains that the Christ is the Son of David, but that David calls him “Lord”. David is made to acknowledge here what was already implied by having Jesus heal as the Son of David: David’s son is greater than he. This would clearly seem to fit in Matthew’s portrayal of Jesus as surpassing Davidic persons and institutions<sup>(40)</sup>: Jesus is also greater than the temple (Matt 12,6 – unique to Matthew) and greater than Solomon (Matt 12,42 // Luke 11,31). In Jesus’ healings, he is shown to be greater than his father David, who could not heal in a similar situation that also included the motifs of fasting and anointing mentioned above: “David therefore pleaded with God for the child; David fasted, and went in and laid all night on the ground.... On the seventh day the child died” (2 Sam 12,16, 18)<sup>(41)</sup>. Jesus, the Son of David, can do what his father could not, save his dying children, both within and outside Israel<sup>(42)</sup>.

In all of this Matthew does not overturn or reject the title Son of David for Jesus: in light of the first verse of Matthew’s Gospel, it would seem to be an incredible claim to say that he does<sup>(43)</sup>. Matthew embraces the title, then expands its implications to include the compassionate power shown in Jesus’ healings. It is not that Matthew shows Jesus to be more than the Son of David, but instead that Matthew shows Jesus to be the Son of David who is more than David. Matthew depicts Jesus as the Christ, the uniquely anointed Son of David, who is uniquely capable of healing.

<sup>(37)</sup> Cf. D. SENIOR, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Nashville 1997) 153.

<sup>(38)</sup> On Matthew’s reference to 2 Sam 5,8 here, see J.C. FENTON, *Saint Matthew* (Pelican New Testament Commentaries; Baltimore 1963) 334; SCHWEIZER, *Matthew*, 408; GUNDRY, *Matthew*, 413; T.Y. MULLINS, “Jesus, the ‘Son of David’”, *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 29 (1991) 117-126; HARRINGTON, *Matthew*, 294; DAVIES – ALLISON, *Matthew*, III, 140. But cf. D. PATTE, *The Gospel according to Matthew: A Structural Commentary on Matthew’s Faith* (Philadelphia 1987) 288-290, who argues that Matthew is indeed referring to the verse, but is not contrasting David and the Son of David.

<sup>(39)</sup> The title is not explicitly used this time.

<sup>(40)</sup> Cf. MULLINS, “Son of David”, 124.

<sup>(41)</sup> David anoints himself after the ordeal (2 Sam 12,20).

<sup>(42)</sup> The story of the Canaanite woman (Matt 15,21-28) clearly makes the title universal, *pace* KINGSBURY, “Son of David”, 598. Cf. also the pagan magi looking for the “king of the Jews” at the beginning of the Gospel (Matt 2,2).

<sup>(43)</sup> *Pace* GIBBS, “Son of David”, 463; KINGSBURY, “Son of David”, 593, 601; MULLINS, “Son of David”, 125.

David was the anointed king, but was not a healer: Jesus Christ, the Son of David, is now the final, climactic example of both.

Core Humanities Program  
Villanova University  
Villanova, PA 19085  
USA

Kim PAFFENROTH

#### SUMMARY

Matthew handles his material in order to relate Jesus' anointing, healing, and his title "Son of David". Matthew does this in order to present Jesus as the uniquely anointed "Christ", the Son of David who has come to heal, and who is in that respect (and others), greater than his father David.

## Exod 23,20-33 and the 'War of YHWH'

Ever since historical-critical research has been done on the "Book of the Covenant" (Exod 20,22–23,19), the epilogue of this legal corpus (23,20-33) has been given special attention. Making use of literary criteria (*Numeruswechsel*, doublets and contradictions), the origin of this pericope has been considered very complex<sup>(1)</sup>. Moreover, almost every scholar who has analysed the passage has indicated its relationship with the book of Deuteronomy and the so-called Deuteronomistic literature<sup>(2)</sup>. In this context and since the beginning of the 20th century, important parts of Exod 23,20-33 have been commonly characterised as dependent on Deuteronom(ist)ic literature<sup>(3)</sup>. Likewise, several scholars have even considered the entire

(<sup>1</sup>) For recent decades, see especially G. SCHMITT, *Du sollst keinen Frieden schliessen mit den Bewohnern des Landes*. Die Weisungen gegen die Kanaanäer in Israels Geschichte und Geschichtsschreibung (BWANT 91; Stuttgart – Berlin – Köln – Mainz 1970) 13-24; H. HORN, "Traditionsschichten in Ex 23,10-33 und Ex 34,10-26", *BZ* 15 (1971) 203-222; G. SEITZ, *Redaktionsgeschichtliche Studien zum Deuteronomium* (BWANT 93; Stuttgart 1971) 77-79; F.-E. WILMS, *Das jahwistische Bundesbuch in Exodus 34* (SANT 32; München 1973) 187-189; J.P. FLOSS, *Jahwe dienen – Göttern dienen*. Terminologische, literarische und semantische Untersuchung einer theologischen Aussage zum Gottesverhältnis im Alten Testament (BBB 45; Köln – Bonn 1975), 247-277; J. HALBE, *Das Privilegrecht Jahwes Ex 34,10-26*. Gestalt und Wesen, Herkunft und Wirken in vordeuteronomischer Zeit (FRLANT 114; Göttingen 1975) 483-502; E. OTTO, *Das Mazzotfest in Gilgal* (BWANT 107; Stuttgart, 1975) 219-254; L. SCHWIENHORST-SCHÖNBERGER, *Das Bundesbuch (Ex 20,22–23,33)*. Studien zu seiner Entstehung und Theologie (BZAW 188; Berlin – New York 1990) 406-414; R. ACHENBACH, *Israel zwischen Verheissung und Gebot*. Literarkritische Untersuchungen zu Deuteronomium 5–11 (EHS.T 422; Frankfurt am Main – Bern – New York – Paris 1991); Y. OSUMI, *Die Kompositionsgeschichte des Bundesbuches Exodus 20,22b–23,33* (OBO 105; Freiburg – Göttingen 1991) 63-68; M. WEINFELD, *Deuteronomy 1–11*. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary (AB 5; New York – London – Toronto – Sydney – Auckland 1991) 377-384; H.-D. NEEF, "'Ich selber bin in ihm' (Ex 23,21). Exegetische Beobachtungen zur Rede vom 'Engel des Herrn' in Ex 23,20-22; 32,34; 33,2; Jdc 2,1-5; 5,23", *BZ* 39 (1995) 54-75; W. OSWALD, *Israel am Gottesberg*. Eine Untersuchung zur Literaturgeschichte der vorderen Sinaiperikope Ex 19–24 und deren historischem Hintergrund (OBO 159; Freiburg 1998) 96-97, 169-170. For a detailed *status quaestionis* of historical-critical research (1837-1996) into Exod 23,20-33, see H. AUSLOOS, *Deuteronomi(sti)sche elementen in Genesis–Numeri*. Een onderzoek naar criteria voor identificatie op basis van een literaire analyse van de epiloog van het "Verbandsboek" (Exodus 23,20-33) (Doctoral Dissertation Faculty of Theology K.U. Leuven; Leuven 1996) 167-306. With regard to the *Numeruswechsel* in Exod 23,20-33, cf. Id., "The Risks of Rash Textual Criticism Illustrated on the Basis of the Numeruswechsel in Exod 23,20-33", *BN* 97 (1999) 5-12.

(<sup>2</sup>) According to W. RESENHÖFFT, *Die Quellenberichte im Josef-Sinai-Komplex (Gen 37 bis Exod 24 mit 32–34)* (EHS.T 199; Bern – Frankfurt am Main – New York 1983) 242, parts of Exod 23,20-33 are written by P. For F.V. WINNETT, *The Mosaic Tradition* (NMES 1; Toronto 1949) 43-46, the entire pericope is P.

(<sup>3</sup>) Cf. W.H. BENNETT, *Biblical Introduction. Old Testament* (London 1899) 32: vv. 31b-33; C. STEUERNAGEL, *Lehrbuch der Einleitung in das Alte Testament mit einem Anhang über die Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen* (SThL; Tübingen 1912) 157: vv.

pericope to be composed by a so-called (post-)Deuteronomistic redactor/author/compositor of the Tetrateuch<sup>(4)</sup>.

An investigation of the arguments which these hypotheses give on behalf of the Deuteronomistic character of Exod 23,20-33\*, however, — when *überhaupt* arguments are given, since the Deuteronomistic origin of the pericope is taken often for granted — immediately reveals their fragility. The main part of the argumentation usually consists of an enumeration of words, expressions or theological concepts, referring to some, more or less parallel passages in Deuteronomistic literature. Occasionally, some stylistic elements in Exod 23,20-33 are characterised to be Deuteronomistic, assuming, however, that paraenesis is an exclusively Deuteronom(ist)ic feature<sup>(5)</sup>.

Reacting against this overly rash characterisation of Exod 23,20-33 as Deuteronomistic, scholars like C. Brekelmans have contended that the pericope in fact represents a preliminary stage in the development of what

---

23-24.28.31c-33; R. SMEND, *Die Erzählung des Hexateuch auf ihre Quellen untersucht* (Berlin 1912) 175, n. 2: v. 24d.e; C.H. CORNILL, *Einleitung in die kanonischen Bücher des Alten Testaments* (GThW, 2/1; Freiburg i.B. 1891 – Tübingen, 71913) 75; S.L. BROWN, *Exodus* (A New Commentary of Holy Scripture Including the Apocrypha; London 1928) 90: vv. 23-24.31b-33; J. MORGENSTERN, "The Book of the Covenant. Part 1", *HUCA* 5 (1928) 1-151, esp. 4; G. BEER, *Exodus. Mit einem Beitrag von K. Galling* (HAT 1/3; Tübingen 1939) 120-122: vv. 23-24.31b-33; C.A. SIMPSON, *The Early Traditions of Israel. A Critical Analysis of the Predeuteronomistic Narrative of the Hexateuch* (Oxford 1948) 218: vv. 24.25a.26a.29-30.31b-33; J.C. RYLAARSDAM, *The Book of Exodus. Introduction and Exegesis* (IB 1; New York – Nashville 1952) 835: vv. 23-25a; SEITZ, *Deuteronomium*, 77-78: vv. 23-26\*; H. CAZELLES, "Histoire et institutions dans la place et la composition d'Ex 20,22-23,19", *Prophetie und geschichtliche Wirklichkeit im Alten Israel*. Festschrift S. Herrmann (eds. R. LIWAK – S. WAGNER) (Stuttgart – Berlin – Köln 1991) 56: vv. 24-25a.

(<sup>4</sup>) A.H. MCNEILE, *The Book of Exodus* (London 1908) 143; B.D. EERDMANS, *Alttestamentliche Studien. Part 3: Das Buch Exodus* (Gießen 1910) 97; SMEND, *Erzählung*, 175, n. 2; M. NOTH, *Das zweite Buch Mose. Exodus übersetzt und erklärt* (ATD 5; Göttingen 1959) 140, 156; G. TE STROETE, *Exodus: uit de grondtekst vertaald en uitgelegd* (BOT 1/2; Roermond – Maaseik 1966) 180; J.P. HYATT, *Commentary on Exodus* (NCeB; London 1971) 250; E. ZENGER, *Die Sinaietheophanie. Untersuchungen zum jahwistischen und elohistischen Geschichtswerk* (FzB 3; Würzburg 1971) 165; F. STOLZ, *Jahwes und Israels Kriege. Kriegstheorien und Kriegserfahrungen im Glauben des alten Israel* (ATANT 60; Zürich 1972), 75; B.S. CHILDS, *Exodus. A Commentary* (OTL; London 1974) 461; ACHENBACH, *Israel*, 258-269; B. RENAUD, *La théophanie du Sinaï Ex 19-24. Exégèse et théologie* (CRB 30; Paris 1991) 166-168; J. VERMEYLEN, "Les sections narratives de Deut 5-11 et leur relation à Ex 19-34", *Das Deuteronomium. Entstehung, gestalt und Botschaft* (ed. N. LOHFINK) (BETL 68; Leuven 1985) 174-207. Cf. also W. JOHNSTONE, "Reactivating the Chronicles Analogy in Pentateuchal Studies, with Special Reference to the Sinai Pericope in Exodus", *ZAW* 99 (1987) 16-37, esp. 25; H.H. SCHMID, *Der sogenannte Jahwist. Beobachtungen und Fragen zur Pentateuchforschung* (Zürich 1976) 97; E. BLUM, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch* (BZAW 189; Berlin – New York 1990) 375-376; Id., "Der kompositionelle Knoten am Übergang von Josua zu Richter. Ein Entflechtungsvorschlag", *Deuteronomy and Deuteronomistic Literature*. Festschrift C.H.W. Brekelmans (eds. M. VERVENNE – J. LUST) (BETL 133; Leuven 1997), 181-212, esp. 190-192; J. VAN SETERS, "The So-Called Deuteronomistic Redaction of the Pentateuch", *Congress Volume. Leuven 1989* (ed. J.A. EMERTON) (VTS 43; Leiden – New York – København – Köln 1991) 58-77, esp. 74.

(<sup>5</sup>) Cf. e.g. R.A. COLE, *Exodus, an Introduction and Commentary* (TOTC; London 1973) 181; CHILDS, *Exodus*, 460-461; VAN SETERS, *Redaction*, 73-74.



are generally accepted to be typical Deuteronomistic language, style and theological concepts<sup>(6)</sup>. Against this background, the epilogue of the "Book of the Covenant" has been characterised as "proto-Deuteronomistic". Since then, a scholarly discussion about the Deuteronomistic components of Exod 23,20-33 has become much more prominent in Pentateuchal research<sup>(7)</sup>.

Within the debate on the Deuteronomistic origin of Exod 23,20-33\*, the discussion about recovering an independent tradition of the "war of YHWH" has played an important role. In this respect, several items are referred to as indicative of this tradition. As such, the use of the terms *שָׁלַח* (v. 20)<sup>(8)</sup>, *מֵאֲלֶיךָ* (vv. 20.23)<sup>(9)</sup>, *הֵלֶךְ לִפְנֵי* (v. 23)<sup>(10)</sup>, *אֵימָה* (v. 27)<sup>(11)</sup>, *הַמָּם* (v. 27)<sup>(12)</sup>, *נָתַן עָרֶף* (v. 28)<sup>(13)</sup>, *צָרַעַה* (v. 28)<sup>(14)</sup>, *גָּרַשׁ* (vv. 28-31)<sup>(15)</sup> and *נָתַן בִּיד* (v. 31)<sup>(16)</sup> is referred to as characteristic of the YHWH-war tradition. According to some scholars, the elements related to this tradition clearly demonstrate the antiquity, *i.e.* the proto-Deuteronomistic character, of the pericope<sup>(17)</sup>. To others, however, pointing to the similarities with Deuteronom(ist)ic literature, several of these elements are peculiar to the Deuteronomistic cycles<sup>(18)</sup>.

<sup>(6)</sup> "Die sogenannten deuteronomischen Elemente in Gen.-Num. Ein Beitrag zur Vorgeschichte des Deuteronomiums", *Volume du Congrès. Genève 1965* (VTS 15; Leiden 1966) 90-96, esp. 94-95; *Id.*, "Éléments deutéronomiques dans le Pentateuque", *Aux grands carrefours de la révélation et de l'exégèse de l'Ancien Testament* (ed. C. HAURET) (RechBib 8; Bruges 1967) 77-91, esp. 84-90. See also N. LOHFINK, *Das Hauptgebot. Eine Untersuchung literarischer Einleitungsfragen zu Dtn 5-11* (AnBib 20; Rome 1963) 122-124; J.G. PLÖGER, *Literarkritische, formgeschichtliche und stilkritische Untersuchungen zum Deuteronomium* (BBB 26; Bonn 1967) 71-77; A. REICHERT, *Der Jehowist und die sogenannten deuteronomistischen Erweiterungen im Buch Exodus* (Doctoral Dissertation Eberhard-Karls-Universität Tübingen; Tübingen 1972) 65-75.

<sup>(7)</sup> Cf. literature in nn. 3 and 4.

<sup>(8)</sup> HORN, *Traditionsschichten*, 221.

<sup>(9)</sup> *Ibid.*, 217. See also T.B. DOZEMAN, *God at War. Power in the Exodus Tradition* (New York - Oxford 1996) 97, nn. 189, 190.

<sup>(10)</sup> M. VERVENNE, *Het Zeeverhaal (Exodus 13,17-14,31). Een literaire studie* (Doctoral Dissertation Faculty of Theology K.U. Leuven; Leuven 1986) 328-329.

<sup>(11)</sup> BREKELMANS, "Éléments deutéronomiques", 87; HYATT, *Exodus*, 250; G. VON RAD, *Der Heilige Krieg im alten Israel* (Zürich 1951) 10-11.

<sup>(12)</sup> BREKELMANS "Éléments deutéronomiques", 87; HALBE, *Privilegrecht*, 495; F. STOLZ, "הַמָּם" *THAT* II, 502-504, esp. 503; VERVENNE, *Zeeverhaal*, 628; DOZEMAN, *God at War*, 38, n. 55. For HORN, "Traditionsschichten", 221, vv. 27-28 as a whole reflect the tradition of the "holy war".

<sup>(13)</sup> SCHMITT, *Frieden schließen*, 18; J. BLENKINSOPP, *The Pentateuch. An Introduction to the First Five Books of the Bible* (London 1992), 189.

<sup>(14)</sup> SCHMITT, *Frieden schließen*, 18.

<sup>(15)</sup> DOZEMAN, *God at War*, 33, n. 29.

<sup>(16)</sup> BREKELMANS, "Éléments deutéronomiques", 88.

<sup>(17)</sup> BREKELMANS, "Éléments deutéronomiques", 87.

<sup>(18)</sup> מֵאֲלֶיךָ: HYATT, *Exodus*, 250-251; R. RENDTORFF, *Das überlieferungsgeschichtliche Problem des Pentateuch* (BZAW 147; Berlin - New York 1977) 152-153; C. WESTERMANN, *Genesis, Tl 3: Genesis 12-36* (BKAT 1/2; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1981) 472; VERMEYLEN, "Sections narratives", 184; JOHNSTONE, "Analogy", 25; RENAUD, *Théophanie*, 65; אֵימָה: J.W. COLENSO, *The Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua Critically Examined. Part 6* (London 1871) 104; HYATT, *Exodus*, 250-251; STOLZ, *Kriege*, 20; OSUMI, *Kompositionsgeschichte*, 215; ACHENBACH, *Israel*, 265; RENAUD, *Théophanie*, 65; הַמָּם: COLENSO, *Pentateuch*, 104; HYATT, *Exodus*, 250-251; ACHENBACH, *Israel*, 265; נָתַן עָרֶף: ACHENBACH, *Israel*, 265; צָרַעַה: COLENSO, *Pentateuch*, 104; BLENKINSOPP, *Introduction*, 189; נָתַן בִּיד: COLENSO, *Pentateuch*, 104.

In reaction against the tendency to characterise Tetrateuch texts as dependent on Deuteronom(ist)ic literature, simply because of similarities of some disparate words, I have accentuated the importance of compositional schemes in order to determine the relationship of a passage in Genesis–Numbers and Deuteronom(ist)ic literature<sup>(19)</sup>. Although much attention has been paid to the vocabulary of Exod 23,20-33 in the past, as far as I am aware, only J. Halbe has dealt with the presence of a compositional pattern within this pericope<sup>(20)</sup>. Against the background of his analysis of Exod 34,11-26, he points to the syntactical scheme “Interjektion” – “Feststellungssatz” – “Imperativ”, that is often used in the Old Testament and that can likewise be found in the first verses of Exod 23,20-33<sup>(21)</sup>.

The relationship between Exod 23 and a more encompassing compositional pattern which plays an important role within Deuteronomistic literature, can be clarified by examining the aforementioned terminology of the “war of YHWH”. In a preliminary phase, however, attention will be paid to this stereotypical scheme within Deuteronomistic literature.

## 2. The Scheme of the “War of YHWH” in Exod 14; Josh 10; Judg 4; 1 Sam 7

It has been convincingly demonstrated by W. Richter, P. Weimar and M. Vervenne, that the narratives of the crossing of the Sea in Exod 13–14, the taking possession of the South in Josh 10, Deborah and Barak’s victory on Sisera in Judg 4 and Israel’s triumph against the Philistines in 1 Sam 7, are closely related to each other<sup>(22)</sup>. In all these pericopes not only does the motif of the “war of YHWH” play an important role, but a similar compositional pattern can be found as well. Although these four texts are not entirely identical<sup>(23)</sup>, the scheme according to which they are composed is remarkable: threat – speech or complaint – action of YHWH.

According to Vervenne, the pattern that Exod 14, Josh 10, Judg 4 and 1 Sam 7 have in common, can be sketched as follows<sup>(24)</sup>:

<sup>(19)</sup> “Les extrêmes se touchent... Proto-Deuteronomie et Simili-Deuteronomie. Elements in Genesis–Numbers”, *Deuteronomy* (eds. VERVENNE – LUST) 341-366. Cf. also M. VERVENNE, “Le récit de la mer (Exode XIII 17 – XIV 31) reflète-t-il une rédaction de type deutéronomique? Quelques remarques sur le problème de l’identification des éléments deutéronomiques contenus dans le Tétrateuque”, *Congress Volume Cambridge 1995* (ed. J.A. EMERTON) (VTS 66; Leiden – New York – Köln 1997) 365-380, esp. 374.

<sup>(20)</sup> HALBE, *Privilegrecht*, 98-107.

<sup>(21)</sup> In v. 20, דָּבַר is followed by the participle שָׁלַח (v. 20) and the imperative הִשְׁמַר מִפְּנֵי (v. 21). Cf. AUSLOOS, *Deuteronomi(sti)sche elementen*, 417.

<sup>(22)</sup> W. RICHTER, *Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zum Richterbuch* (BBB 18; Bonn 1966) 180-186; P. WEIMAR, “Die Jahwekriegerzählungen in Exodus 14, Josua 10, Richter 4 und 1 Samuel 7”, *Bib* 57 (1976) 38-73; VERVENNE, *Zeeverhaal*, 796-799.

<sup>(23)</sup> Cf. RICHTER, *Untersuchungen*, 181: “Alle Texte zeichnen sich durch sehr individuelles Gepräge aus”.

<sup>(24)</sup> VERVENNE, *Zeeverhaal*, 797.

	Exod 14	Josh 10	Judg 4	1 Sam 7
1. Israel's action				
הוֹדָה כִּי	5ab		12a	
שָׁמַע כִּי		1a		7a
The enemy's reaction	5c-10c	5	13	7b
2. Fear	10d	2	—	7c
3. Encouragement				
Reassurance	13-14	8		
Exhortation to fight		14		
Complaint – result	11-12			8-9
4. YHWH's action	24c	10a	15	10
5. The enemy's defeat				
Israel's action				
כָּסָה		10bd		11c
נָפַל			16b	
רָדַף		10c	16a	11b
Result: לֹא נִשְׁאָר	28c		16c	
description		11		13-14

In Vervenne's view, there can be no doubt that the similarities between Exod 14, Josh 10, Judg 4 and 1 Sam 7 are caused by a literary relationship<sup>(25)</sup>. Referring to K.A.D. Smelik, who states that it is more plausible to speak about the literary genius of the Israelites in the seventh and sixth century B.C. than about a great historian of the tenth century<sup>(26)</sup>, Vervenne disagrees with Weimar, who dates the origin of this "war of YHWH" scheme in the early monarchy<sup>(27)</sup>. According to Vervenne, the pattern is characteristic of Deuteronomistic literature<sup>(28)</sup>. He, however, also points to a fundamental difference between Exod 14 on the one hand, and Josh 10, Judg 4 and 1 Sam 7 on the other. Although it is indicated in the Sea Narrative, parallel to the latter texts, that YHWH will fight on Israel's side, Israel's active involvement is never stated explicitly. In Vervenne's view, the particular version of the "war-story" as it is found in Exod 14\* fits best after the fall of the Northern Kingdom in 722 B.C, since it contains a strong appeal to trust in YHWH alone<sup>(29)</sup>. As a result, the absence of the typical feature that Israel itself, as an allied force, takes part in the war, would, according to Vervenne, be an indication in favour of the proto-Deuteronomic character of Exod 14\*<sup>(30)</sup>.

<sup>(25)</sup> According to VERVENNE, *Zeeverhaal*, 798, the similarities between Exod 14, Josh 10, Judg 4 and 1 Sam 7 cannot be explained "op grond van een gemeenschappelijk (traditioneel) schema. De formele verwantschap duidt op een literaire verwantschap".

<sup>(26)</sup> K.A.D. SMELIK, "Profetische reflectie op het verleden. Bijbelse verhalen tussen fictie en geschiedenis", *De bijbel maakt school. Een Amsterdamse weg in de exegese* (eds. K. DEURLOO – R. ZUURMOND) (Baarn 1984) 60-75, esp. 68.

<sup>(27)</sup> WEIMAR, "Jahwekriegerzählungen", 72-73.

<sup>(28)</sup> VERVENNE, *Zeeverhaal*, 798. About the affinity of Exod 13-14\* with the Deuteronom(istic) language, style and theology, see 796.

<sup>(29)</sup> VERVENNE, *Zeeverhaal*, 799. Compare with Is 7. Are there not, however, several other periods within the history of Israel into which this theme would fit?

<sup>(30)</sup> Recently, Vervenne is more cautious in determining a passage as proto-Deuteronomic: *Id.*, "Current Tendencies and Developments in the Study of the Book of Exodus", *The Studies in the Book of Exodus. Redaction – Reception – Interpretation* (ed. M. VERVENNE) (BETL 126; Leuven 1996), 21-59, esp. 41-42: "Until recently, I was convinced that a first redaction, constituting a relatively autonomous story, could be characterised as resulting from a 'proto-Deuteronomic' redactional reworking (JE) of existing materials. It appears to me today, however, that this hypothesis

Foregoing the question whether the origin of the scheme of the "war of YHWH" is (proto-)Deuteronom(ist)ic or whether it is much older, in the following part of this contribution I will indicate that some crucial elements of this compositional structure can also be found in Exod 23,20-33, a text which, as already indicated, is often brought into relationship with a Deuteronom(ist)ic reworking of Genesis–Numbers.

## 2. The Scheme of the "War of YHWH" in Exod 23,20-33

At least three important elements of the aforementioned scheme occur in Exod 23,20-33, a divine speech in which YHWH announces the taking possession of the Promised Land: (a) YHWH will cause confusion within the enemy's camp (v. 27: *הָמָם*); (b) the enemies will "turn their backs" to the Israelites (v. 27: *נָתַן עֲרֹף*); (c) YHWH will hand over the inhabitants of the land to the Israelites (v. 31: *נָתַן בְּיָד*).

(a) Analogous to the pattern of YHWH's war in Exod 14, Josh 10, Judg 4 and 1 Sam 7, it is said in Exod 23,27 that YHWH will throw into confusion each people that Israel fights against (*וְהִמָּחֵי אֶת כָּל הָעַם*)<sup>(31)</sup>. The vocabulary used is identical with Exod 14,24, Josh 10,10, Judg 4,15 and 1 Sam 7,10. In all these passages, the term *הָמָם* occurs. This is so particularly significant, since the verb *הָמָם* is not frequently used in the Hebrew Bible. With YHWH as subject, as it is the case in Exod 23,27, it is only found in the aforesaid verses and in Ps 18,15 (= 2 Sam 22,15); 144,6; 2 Chr 15,6. Contrary to the latter verse, the two former passages undoubtedly function within the context of YHWH-war.

(b) Taking into account the context of the term *הָמָם* in Exod 23,27, the expression *נָתַן בְּיָד* also points in the direction of a relationship between Exod 23 and the (Deuteronomistic) scheme of the war of YHWH, since the formula plays a role in Josh 10 and Judg 4<sup>(32)</sup>. In this respect, however, it is important to note that this expression often occurs throughout the Hebrew Bible to denote that YHWH does or does not deliver the enemies to Israel<sup>(33)</sup> or *vice versa*<sup>(34)</sup>. Moreover, in a profane context, the expression can mean "entrust"<sup>(35)</sup>, "put something at someone's disposal"<sup>(36)</sup>, or —

---

needs much closer examination in order to make a more precise identification of the various elements that remind us of the Dt/dtr traditions".

<sup>(31)</sup> On the distributive use of *כָּל הָעַם*, cf. AUSLOOS, *Deuteronomi(sti)sche elementen*, 500-501.

<sup>(32)</sup> Josh 10,8.19.30.32; Judg 4,7.14.

<sup>(33)</sup> Exod 23,31; Num 21,2.34; Deut 2,24.30; 3,2.3; 7,24; 20,13; 21,10; Josh 2,24; 6,2; 8,1.7.18; 10,8.19.30.32; 11,8; 21,44; 24,8.11; Judg 1,2; 3,10.28; 4,7.14; 7,2.7.9.14.15.16; 8,3.15; 11,30.32; 12,3; 18,10; 20,28; 1 Sam 14,10.12.37; 17,47; 23,4.14; 24,5.11; 26,23; 30,23; 2 Sam 5,19; 1 Kgs 20,13; 22,6.12.15; 2 Kgs 3,10.13.18; 17,20; Ezra 9,24; 1 Chr 14,10; 22,18; 2 Chr 16,8; 18,5.11.14; 28,9 (cf. also Gen 9,2).

<sup>(34)</sup> Deut 1,27; 7,7; Judg 2,14; 6,1; 13,1; 1 Sam 28,19; 2 K 13,3; 21,14; Jer 20,4.5; 21,10; 22,25; 27,6; 29,21; 32,3.4.24.25.28.36.43; 34,2.3.20.21; 37,17; 38,3.16; 39,17; 44,30; 46,26; Ezek 7,21; 16,39; 21,36; 23,9.28; 31,11; 39,23; Ps 78,61; 106,41; Lam 2,7; Dan 1,2; 9,10; Ezra 9,7; 10,30; 2 Chr 13,16; 25,20; 28,5; 36,17. Judg 16,23.24 mentions how the Philistean deity Dagon has delivered Samson to the Philistines.

<sup>(35)</sup> Gen 30,35; 32,17; 39,4.8.22; 2 Sam 10,10; 16,8; 1 Kgs 15,18; 1 Chr 19,11; 2 Chr 34,16.

<sup>(36)</sup> Gen 40,13; Exod 5,21; 10,25; Deut 24,1.3; Judg 9,29; Isa 22,21; Jer 23,31; 30,24.25.

often in a military context — “deliver”<sup>(37)</sup>. Although the utterance is almost exclusively found within Deuteronomistic literature with YHWH as subject and the enemies of Israel as object, it seems, however, to be the most appropriate Hebrew expression in order to render the idea of handing over.

(c) Besides *הבם* and *נָתַן בִּיד* the motif of the flight of the enemies (v. 31: *נָתַן עָרָף*) fits very well into the line of thought that is developed in the scheme of YHWH's war, although it cannot be found literally in Exod 14, Josh 10, Judg 4 and 1 Sam 7. In the Sea Narrative, the Israelites are first fleeing from the Egyptians. Afterwards, when the Israelites have crossed the Sea and the Egyptians are pursuing them, they do not even have any opportunity to flee. Notwithstanding the fact that the expression *נָתַן עָרָף* is not used in Josh 10,10, Judg 4,16 and 1 Sam 7,11, the activity of the flight is clearly suggested in these passages by making use of the verb *רָדַף*.

Contrary to the expression *נָתַן בִּיד*, which plays an important role in Deuteronomy and Deuteronomistic History, the formula *נָתַן עָרָף* only occurs in Exod 23,27 and Ps 18,41 (= 2 Sam 22,41)<sup>(38)</sup>. Within the Deuteronomistic canon<sup>(39)</sup>, however, the noun *עָרָף* is frequently used<sup>(40)</sup>. With the exception of Josh 7,8.12, 2 Sam 22,41 and Jer 32,33, in which *עָרָף* has the connotation “to turn away from”, *עָרָף* often is linked with the term *קִשָּׁה*<sup>(41)</sup>, thus referring to Israel's obstinacy. In Jer 32,33, the expression is applied to the inhabitants of Judah, who turned away from YHWH (*פָּנּוּ עָרָף*). Josh 7,8 (*רָדַף עָרָף*) and 7,12 (*פָּנּוּ עָרָף*) deal with Israel, taking refuge in order to be saved from hostile peoples. In these passages, the ones who are running away are at the same time the subject of the verb that accompanies the term. In Exod 23,27, however, YHWH is responsible for the flight of Israel's enemies.

In short, although Exod 23, Josh 10, Judg 4 and 1 Sam 7 have the theme of the flight of Israel's enemies in a context of YHWH-war in common, Exod 23,27 takes a special place in this series of texts because of the particular use of the term *עָרָף*. Outside Exod 23,27, the expression *נָתַן עָרָף* only occurs in the psalm in 2 Sam 22,41 (= Ps 18,41). Because of the special character of 2 Sam 22, it is questionable whether the expression can be characterised as Deuteronom(ist)ic<sup>(42)</sup>. Moreover, in 2 Sam 22,41b,

<sup>(37)</sup> Deut 19,12; Judg 15,12.13.18; 2 Sam 20,21; 21,9; 1 Kgs 18,9; 2 Kgs 18,30; 19,10; Isa 36,15; Jer 26,24; 38,18.19; 43,3; 46,24; Ps 10,14; Job 9,24; Dan 11,11; 1 Chr 5,20.

<sup>(38)</sup> In 2 Chr 29,6, the expression metaphorically refers to Israel's apostasy from YHWH (cf. M. ZIPOR, “עָרָף”, *TWAT* VI, 392-397, esp. 394).

<sup>(39)</sup> I.e. Deuteronomy, Joshua-Kings and the so-called Deuteronomistic parts of Jeremiah. As to the designation “Deuteronomistic canon”, see AUSLOOS, “Extrêmes”, 347-348; cf. also N. LOHFINK, “Gab es eine deuteronomistische Bewegung?”, *Jeremia und die „deuteronomistische Bewegung“* (ed. W. GROSS) (BBB 98; Weinheim 1995), 313-382, esp. 322.

<sup>(40)</sup> Deut 9,6.13; 10,16; 31,27; Josh 7,8.12; 2 Sam 22,41; 2 Kgs 17,41; Jer 7,26; 17,23; 32,33.

<sup>(41)</sup> M. WEINFELD, *Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomist School* (Oxford 1972) 341, characterises the expression *הקִשָּׁה עָרָף* as a stereotypical feature of Deuteronomist language, referring to Deut 10,16; 2 Kgs 17,14; Jer 7,26; 17,23; 19,15.

<sup>(42)</sup> Cf. also BREKELMANS, “Éléments deutéronomiques”, 87; HALBE, *Privilegrecht*, 142; OTTO, *Mazzotfest*, 206; U. KÖPPEL, *Das deuteronomistische Geschichtswerk und seine Quellen*. Die Absicht der deuteronomistischen Geschichtsdarstellung aufgrund des Vergleichs zwischen Num 21,21-35 und Dtn 2,26-3,3 (EHS.T 122; Bern 1979) esp. 186.

its meaning is different, since this verse does not deal with the expulsion of an enemy, but with their destruction<sup>(43)</sup>.

Taking these elements together, one can conclude that, although Exod 23,20-33 resembles the scheme of YHWH-war as it can be found in Exod 14, Josh 10, Judg 4 and 1 Sam 7, it at the same time differs from it on significant points. First, contrary to these pericopes, in which a battle between Israel and the hostile nations is narrated, the aforementioned elements reflecting the war of YHWH scheme in Exod 23,20-33 all are part of a divine command. Secondly, the specific scheme that structures the narratives of Exod 14, Josh 10, Judg 4 and 1 Sam 7 is entirely absent from Exod 23, since only some, nevertheless very important, fragments of it can be found in the latter pericope. Thirdly, parallel to Exod 14, the Israelites do not have to take part in the war against the foreign peoples, unless v. 24 is taken into consideration. Moreover, because of the fact that *נָתַן בִּיד* is not characteristic to the scheme and *נָתַן עָרֵךְ* is absent from it, it seems doubtful whether the author(s) of Exod 23 can be considered to be literarily dependent on the more or less stereotypical scheme that can be found in Exod 14, Josh 10, Judg 4 and 1 Sam 7. Probably, the compositor(s) of the epilogue of the "Book of the Covenant" would have applied it more rigorously to his/their own composition. As such, even if the loose combination of elements from the scheme in Exod 23 can be seen either as an early preamble to the (Deuteronomistic) pattern or as a late imitation of it<sup>(44)</sup>, in my view, there is more evidence to consider both Exod 23 on the one hand, and Exod 14, Josh 10, Judg 4 and 1 Sam 7 on the other as separate witnesses of a tradition about the war of YHWH<sup>(45)</sup>.

Against this background, it is interesting to recall the other elements scholars have brought into relation with the tradition about the "war of YHWH" within Exod 23,20-33. These, however, do not play a role in the (Deuteronomistic) scheme. Moreover, none of these elements points to a dependency on Deuteronomistic literature. There are no good reasons to consider the *בְּלֹאֵךְ* (vv. 20,23), leading the Israelites into the Promised land, to be a typical Deuteronom(ist)ic theme<sup>(46)</sup>. Within the Deuteronomistic

<sup>(43)</sup> Cf. also A.A. ANDERSON, *2 Samuel* (WBC 11; Dallas, TX 1989), 265: "The scene depicted is either that of retreat (cf. Exod 23:27) or of total defeat of the enemies (i.e., the victor places his foot on the neck of the enemy, as in Josh 10:24). V 41b seems to suggest the latter alternative".

<sup>(44)</sup> In order to express this imitating relationship, I use the term "simili-Deuteronomistic". Cf. my contribution "Extrêmes", 352-355.

<sup>(45)</sup> Cf. also the already mentioned similarities with Ps 18: verse 15: *הָרַם*; verse 41: *נָתַן עָרֵךְ*. According to M. DAHOOD, *Psalms 1-50* (AB 16; New York 1965) 104, this royal song of thanksgiving can be attributed to David. Dahood's explanation of *נָתַן עָרֵךְ*, suggesting that it should not be interpreted as denoting the flight of enemies, but rather evoke "the image of the victor placing his foot on the neck of the vanquished, as represented on reliefs and described in literary texts" (116) is not convincing. In order to defend this thesis, Dahood refers to Josh 10,24, in which Joshua summons the chiefs of the men of war to put their feet upon the necks of the defeated kings. In this text, however, the noun *עָרֵךְ* is not used.

For the relationship between Exod 23,20-33 and Deut 7 with regard to the "war of YHWH" theme, see esp. WEINFELD, *Deuteronomic School*, 46-48, who indicates that in the latter text the sayings from Exod 23 "have been reworked and expanded into a military oration of consummate construction" (46).

<sup>(46)</sup> See e.g. WEINFELD, *Deuteronomic School*, 34.

canon, it only occurs in Judg 2,1-5, a passage that, in my view, is a summary of several traditions about the Exodus and the journey through the desert<sup>(47)</sup>. The construction *הלך לפני* (v. 23), with a divine messenger as subject, only occurs in the book of Exodus (Exod 14,19; 23,23; 32,34)<sup>(48)</sup>. Within the Deuteronomistic canon, the noun *אִימָה* (v. 27) is only found in Deut 32,25 and Josh 2,9. In the former passage, however, the term functions as a threat to Israel. According to the latter text, the Israelites themselves are a threat to the enemy, contrary to Exod 23,27 in which God will send his terror ahead of the Israelites<sup>(49)</sup>. Finally, the noun *צָרָעָה* (v. 28) occurs only three times in the Hebrew Bible (Exod 23,28; Deut 7,20; Josh 24,12). Although these passages have several elements in common, this term cannot be considered to be typically Deuteronom(ist)ic<sup>(50)</sup>.

\* \* \*

The comparison of Exod 23 with the (Deuteronomistic) scheme of YHWH-war in Exod 14, Josh 10, Judg 4 and 1 Sam 7, together with a brief investigation of the other elements within the epilogue of the "Book of the Covenant", which scholars have indicated as related to the motif of war of YHWH, is not truly indicative of the dependence of Exod 23 on Deuteronomistic literature. On the contrary, the language that seems to be connected with the "war of YHWH" rather suggests that the author(s) of Exod 23 has/have made use of a terminology that was peculiar to a tradition about YHWH as warrior, which probably has been used by the author(s) of the (Deuteronomistic) scheme as well.

Katholieke Universiteit Leuven  
Faculty of Theology  
Sint-Michielsstraat 6 - B-3000 Leuven

Hans AUSLOOS

### SUMMARY

Some crucial elements of the compositional structure of the "war of YHWH" which can be found in Exod 14, Josh 10, Judg 4 and 1 Sam 7, equally occur in Exod 23,20-33. The differences between the latter text and the former pericopes, however, point into the conclusion that Exod 14, Josh 10, Judg 4 and 1 Sam 7 on the one hand and Exod 23,20-33 on the other are separate witnesses of an earlier tradition about YHWH as warrior.

<sup>(47)</sup> Cf. AUSLOOS, *Deuteronomi(sti)sche elementen*, 418-420; Id., "Judges 2:1-5 and the Deuteronom(ist)ic Redaction of Genesis-Numbers" (forthcoming). Using the verb *הלך* as a feature for the YHWH-war tradition (cf. *supra* n. 8) seems dubious to me, since the verb occurs 570 times within the Old Testament (cf. F.I. ANDERSEN - A.D. FORBES, *The Vocabulary of the Old Testament* [Rome 1989] 434).

<sup>(48)</sup> AUSLOOS, *Deuteronomi(sti)sche elementen*, 457-458.

<sup>(49)</sup> AUSLOOS, *Deuteronomi(sti)sche elementen*, 497-498.

<sup>(50)</sup> AUSLOOS, *Deuteronomi(sti)sche elementen*, 506-509. With regard to use of the verb *גרש* with YHWH or his messenger as subject, it should be noted that, contrary to the expulsion of the autochthonous peoples in Exod 23,28-31, in Deuteronomy their destruction is accentuated. Compare Deut 33,27, where *גרש* and *שמד* are used together. See WEINFELD, *Deuteronomic School*, 346-347.

# RECENSIONES

## Vetus Testamentum

Damian J. WYNN-WILLIAMS, *The State of the Pentateuch. A Comparison of the Approaches of M. Noth and E. Blum* (BZAW 249). Berlin – New York, Walter de Gruyter, 1997. xi-263p. 16 x 23,5. DM 169,—

Die Arbeit ist als Dissertation in Melbourne, Australien, bei A.F. Campbell entstanden, der für seine intensiven Bemühungen um die Pflege des Erbes von M. Noth bekannt ist. Der Titel will wohl anzeigen, daß die Publikation sich als Beitrag zur Pentateuchdiskussion versteht, kann aber irreführen: Behandelt wird keineswegs der Pentateuch insgesamt, sondern allein die Jakobgeschichte, genauer Gen 25; 27–33. Zudem geht es bei Noth nur um einen Teilaspekt seiner Pentateuchanalyse, und als Alternativ-“approach” führt W.-W. zunächst R. Rendtorffs Ansatz ein (v. 4-7), bespricht dann aber vorwiegend E. Blum (dazu s.u.). Die Arbeit selbst ist übersichtlich gegliedert: Auf eine Orientierung zur Fragestellung, in der vor allem M. Noths Verständnis der Pentateuchquellen vorgestellt wird, folgen “Teil 2” mit einer kritischen Präsentation von Noths Analyse von Gen 25–33 (*Überlieferungsgeschichte des Pentateuch* [Stuttgart 1948; im folgenden: ÜP]) (29-80), “Teil 3” mit einer umfänglichen Behandlung der Analyse von Blum (*Komposition der Vätergeschichte* [WMANT 57; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1984; im folgenden: KdV]) (83-191) und “Teil 4” mit einem Vergleich der “interpretative models” (195-237) sowie abschließenden “conclusions” (237-252).

M. Noth fällt in dieser Untersuchung allein die Rolle zu, die klassische Urkundenhypothese zu vertreten. Dies kann verwundern, hat Noth doch zur Jakobgeschichte keine ausführliche Quellenanalyse vorgelegt, und seine sparsame Argumentation in ÜP bezieht sich auf einige Grundlinien und Einzelfragen, in denen er von dem seinerzeit üblichen Verständnis abweicht bzw. sich der Kritik von Volz/Rudolph erwehrt. Die ausführliche Rekonstruktion (allein zur Jakobüberlieferung ist sie umfangreicher als die Quellenkritik zum Pentateuch insgesamt) der vorliterarischen Überlieferungsgeschichte, in der Noth aus dem Genesistext einen tiefgestaffelten Überlieferungsprozeß von diversen Einzelüberlieferungen über eigenständige Jakob-Esau- bzw. Jakob-Laban-Geschichten, deren Verknüpfung und Ergänzung bis zu den Umrisen einer umfassenden Jakob-Esau-Laban-Geschichte detailliert und mit konkreten Verortungen erschließt, dieser Teil der Hypothese bleibt bei W.-W. ausgeblendet. Letzteres gilt sogar für die “gemeinsame Grundlage” (G), die Noth im Rahmen seiner Quellenkritik (!) aufgrund der engen materialen Verwandtschaft von “J” und “E” postulieren



zu müssen meint. Wenn auch nicht im Wortlaut, so läßt sich nach Noth "in deutlichen Umrissen die Gestalt von G immerhin noch erkennen, und auch allerlei Einzelheiten der Erzvätergeschichte, besonders ... der Jakob- und Josephüberlieferung, lassen sich aus dem gemeinsamen Bestand von J und E für G noch ermitteln" (ÜP, 42). All dies verschwindet bei W.-W. in einer nicht weiter differenzierten "black box" mündlicher Überlieferung, die gleichwohl den vorliegenden Text bis in seine Unebenheiten hinein noch bestimme.

An dem auf die Quellenkritik reduzierten Ansatz Noths interessiert W.-W. vor allem dessen relativ offenes, "flexibles" Konzept der "Quellen" und ihrer redaktionellen Verbindung, in dem von vornherein die Möglichkeit sprachlicher, narrativer und inhaltlicher Inkonsistenzen zugestanden wird, ebenso wie die Wahrscheinlichkeit von Auslassungen, Lücken etc. (bes. bei E). Wie W.-W. herausstellt, hat das damit verbundene behutsame Vorgehen Noths bei der internen Literarkritik einzelner Episoden methodisch manches für sich. Allerdings besteht bei einer extensiven Inanspruchnahme dieser Flexibilität zugleich die Tendenz einer Immunisierung der ganzen Hypothese; dies zeigt jedenfalls deren Reinterpretation durch W.-W.: Seine einfühlsame Darstellung von Noths Quellenkritik in der Jakobüberlieferung kann einerseits die Scheidung in J/E (nach Noths Kriterien!) nicht ohne weiteres bestätigen, so bes. im Bericht der Geburt der Kinder Jakobs (Gen 29–30) (52–53, 72), aber auch der Bethelepisode (72), darüber hinaus lasse sich die Existenz einer kontinuierlichen E-Erzählung nicht beweisen (79). Andererseits sieht er die Gültigkeit von Noths Hypothese nicht grundsätzlich in Frage gestellt, selbst wenn statt einer E-Quelle nur mit punktuellen Redaktionen zu rechnen wäre (79–80)! Noth selbst hat dies völlig anders gesehen, wie seine dezidierte Auseinandersetzung mit Volz/Rudolph (ÜP, 21–28) belegt. Darüber hinaus muß man fragen, wie eine Hypothese von dieser Flexibilität überhaupt noch zu widerlegen wäre. Das in diesem Zusammenhang als erstes sich aufdrängende "Schibboleth" hätte wohl die bei Blum u.a. vertretene These der ursprünglichen Eigenständigkeit der Jakoberzählung zu sein — ausgerechnet diese Frage wird aber in der Arbeit erstaunlicherweise nirgends explizit diskutiert!

Ist die Darstellung von Noths Überlieferungsgeschichte des Pentateuch gleichzeitig durch eine Reduktion und eine Öffnung des Modells über das Autorenkonzept hinaus bestimmt, so die Präsentation von Blums Analyse durch eine Veränderung der Maßstäbe und durch eine nachhaltige *Umstrukturierung* der referierten Hypothese: Laut W.-W. bildet für Blum "The Early Jacob Story" die grundlegende Jakobgeschichte; diese "Story" wird denn auch in ihrem englischen Wortlaut mitgeteilt (85–93), daraufhin auf ihre Konsistenz, auf "gaps" etc. hin untersucht und "evaluiert". Nun gibt es eine "Frühe Jakoberzählung" bei Blum selbst gar nicht, der Begriff dürfte aber die "Jakob-Esau-Laban-Geschichte" meinen. Allerdings wird diese von Blum weder im Wortlaut noch durch Versabgrenzungen definiert, vielmehr ist von erkennbaren "Umrissen" die Rede, von der "substantiellen" Zuordnung bestimmter Episoden (KdV, 174 [cf. das obige Zitat von Noth zu "G"!]), ja mehr noch, die Möglichkeit einer durchgehenden Wiederherstellung des ursprünglichen Wortlauts durch Ausscheidung späterer Elemente wird für die Jakob-Esau-Laban-Geschichte ausdrücklich bestritten (KdV, 127 Mitte)! Offenbar liegt hier ein basales Mißverständnis vor — freilich mit einer

gewissen Methode. Der Neudefinition einer "Early Jacob Story" korrespondiert nämlich das Fehlen der eigentlichen Hauptkomposition der Jakobüberlieferung, der sog. "Jakoberzählung" in Gen 25B\*; \*27–33. Als *die* Komposition, die im überlieferten Text weitgehend noch greifbar und in ihrer erzählerischen Kohärenz aufweisbar ist, haben ihr Nachweis und ihre (synchrone) Interpretation bei Blum die methodische Priorität. Von ihr aus können ältere "Bausteine der Überlieferung" (darunter die "Jakob-Esau-Laban-G".!) als Elemente der "Vorgeschichte" nur mit unterschiedlicher Wahrscheinlichkeit erschlossen werden (KdV, 171-175), jüngere Fortschreibungen sind als spätere "Bearbeitungen" abgesetzt (KdV, 152-167). In W.-W.s Darstellung wird diese Gewichtung genau umgekehrt und der implizierte methodische Zugang ignoriert (und dies nachhaltig, bis in die letzten Zusammenfassungen, die immer von der ominösen "Early Jacob Story" handeln, hinein). Dafür kreiert W.-W. nun "the expanded Jacob-Esau Story", worunter die für Blums Jakoberzählung wesentliche "K-Schicht" mit den späteren Bearbeitungen bis hin zur priesterlichen Schicht als "Additions to the Early Jacob Story"(!) subsumiert werden. Kurzum: W.-W. schreibt die von ihm referierte Analyse um, indem er sie unter der Hand dem eigenen Kategoriensystem (von rekonstruierbaren Quellen, ausscheidbaren Redaktionen etc.) anpaßt. Das Resultat ist freilich nicht Blum, sondern sozusagen ein 'umformatierter' "Blum". Die Subtilität dieser Transformation besteht darin, daß sie erst bei einem direkten und eingehenden Vergleich mit dem Original erkennbar wird. Dergestalt anverwandelt, läßt sich der umformatierte Blum natürlich einfacher handhaben und vergleichen. Paradigmenfremde Elemente wie die programmatische Einführung der Kategorie "Komposition" (in Abgrenzung von "Redaktion" etc.) (KdV, 1-3) brauchen dann nicht auf ihre methodischen Implikationen hin bedacht zu werden; Blumsche methodische Vorbehalte — bei Noth als Vorzug seines Ansatzes gepriesen — können bei "Blum" ausgeblendet werden; Verzicht auf Vorstufenrekonstruktionen im Wortlaut — bei Noth Zeichen der "Flexibilität" — kann entweder ignoriert oder als Erklärungsdefizit evaluiert werden.

Der Versuchung, dies an Einzelbeispielen vorzuführen, etwa an der verkürzenden Diskussion der Analyse von Gen 28,10-22 (und ihrer Bedeutung für die Gesamthypothese), soll hier widerstanden werden. Cf. dazu E. Blum, "Noch einmal: Jakobs Traum in Bethel – Genesis 28,10-22" (erscheint in Kürze in einer Festschrift). Nicht unerwähnt bleiben kann aber ein Defizit, das in einer solchen Arbeit doch überrascht: W.-W. kennt Blums Revision der Unterscheidung von "Vg<sup>1</sup>" und "Vg<sup>2</sup>" nicht, insofern ist ein Teil seiner Diskussion überholt. Cf. E. Blum, *Studien zur Komposition des Pentateuch* (BZAW 189; Berlin – New York 1990) 214, A. 35.

Der letzte Hauptteil mit dem Vergleich der referierten Zugänge ist erkennbar um eine vorsichtig abwägende Erörterung, speziell unter methodischen Gesichtspunkten, bemüht. Gleichwohl leidet er unter einem spürbaren Handicap, nicht nur infolge der vorgängigen Transformation diskutierter Positionen, sondern auch durch eine strukturelle Inkonsistenz der leitenden Problemstellung. Diese wird zu Beginn wie folgt bestimmt: "The purpose of this study is to evaluate R. Rendtorff's claim that, once the implications of the form-critical and traditio-historical method are properly appreciated and the method consequently applied, a division of the Pentateuch

into continuous 'sources' can no longer be justified ..". (v). Die vorrangige Beschäftigung mit der Analyse von Blum wird sodann damit begründet, daß diese eine "application of Rendtorff's approach" darstelle (23-24 u.ö.). Nun wären Blums Pentateucharbeiten in der Tat ohne Rendtorffs radikale Infragestellung des (vermeintlichen) Pentateuchkonsenses und ohne seine Ermutigung, die Texte in neuer Weise wahrzunehmen, nicht möglich gewesen. Gleichwohl stellen sie weder der Intention nach noch in der methodischen Durchführung "Applikationen" des Rendtorffschen Ansatzes dar. So hätte W.-W. bemerken können, daß Blum (im Unterschied zu Rendtorff) weder von einer methodischen Inkongruenz literarkritischer und "überlieferungsgeschichtlicher" bzw. "formgeschichtlicher" Ansätze ausgeht, noch im Ergebnis bei einem "Block-Modell" anlangt (cf. Blum, *Studien*). Darüber hinaus gibt es bei Blum das fortwährend von W.-W. unterstellte Konzept (und den Begriff) einer "überlieferungsgeschichtlichen Methode" gar nicht! "Überlieferungsgeschichte" steht hier vielmehr — im Sinne von M. Noth (ÜP, 1)! — für den Aufgabenhorizont (nicht das Procedere!) der Analyse: die Diachronie des Textes von den Anfängen bis zur Endgestalt, freilich mit der Einschränkung daß die mündliche Phase dem analytischen Zugriff zumeist entzogen bleibt. (Umgekehrt scheint W.-W. von Blum her für Rendtorffs Pentateuchbuch eine Beschränkung auf literarische Prozesse zu postulieren – durchaus zu Unrecht.) Diese strukturellen Inkohärenzen treten naturgemäß vor allem bei den abschließenden methodischen Erörterungen (häufig mit wechselndem Bezug auf Rendtorff bzw. Blum) zutage, näher besehen z.T. mit *Scheindebatten*, die aus den ungeklärten Vorannahmen erwachsen (cf. z.B. 202-207).

Demgegenüber arbeitet W.-W. treffend heraus, daß Noth gegenüber Blum (hinzuzufügen wäre: und den meisten neueren Exegeten) viel selbstverständlicher auf die mündliche Überlieferung zur Erklärung von Inkohärenzbeobachtungen im überlieferten Text rekurrierte. Freilich ist dabei zu bedenken, daß die Forschung zu Noths Zeiten ganz wesentlich von der Vorstellung bestimmt war, mündliche Texte würden über Generationen in mehr oder weniger fester Gestalt tradiert und bewahrten so ihre Geschichte nach der Art von Sedimentablagerungen. Wenn aber — so die neuere Erzählforschung — jede Erzählung (als Akt) eine freie, durch die Kommunikationssituation bestimmte Neuproduktion darstellt, verliert auch der analytische Zugriff (von Phänomenen des Oberflächentextes her) hinter die Textproduktion in der Verschriftung erheblich an Plausibilität.

Erstaunlicherweise scheint W.-W. dagegen die Signifikanz einer noch grundlegenden methodischen Orientierungsfrage nicht eigentlich realisiert zu haben: der Relation von Synchronie und Diachronie, hier genauer: die Fragen der *heuristischen* Priorität der synchronen bzw. der literarkritischen Textwahrnehmung und der Zuweisung der Beweislast. Jedenfalls Blums vorrangige Frage nach erzählerischen und kompositorischen Texturen (in KdV und Studien) ist in diesem Horizont durchaus als methodische Alternative zum konventionellen Vorgehen der Quellenkritik gemeint. (Insofern erweist sich W.-W.s "rewriting" der Hypothese tatsächlich als Symptom eines grundlegenden Nichtverstehens.) Ein abschließendes Beispiel mag andeuten, worum es hierbei geht: Im Finale der Jakoberzählung scheidet Noth Gen 32,14b-22; 33,4.5.8-11 als "E"-Fragmente aus der sonst "J" zugeschriebenen

Erzählung aus, wohl da er die Entsendung der Herden als מַחָה für Esau in 32,14b-22 als Doppelung zu 32,4-9 (Boten zu Esau, Teilung des Lagers) sieht und die Verse in Gen 33 die מַחָה von 32,14b-22 voraussetzen. Nach W.-W. (165-166) spricht für die Ausscheidung zudem eine inhaltliche Spannung in 32,14-22: V. 14b sei einerseits nicht als neuer Tag markiert, die Entsendung der Herden andererseits aber kaum in der Dunkelheit vorzustellen. Nun ergibt eine synchrone Analyse von Kap. 32-33 aber ein ganzes Geflecht von narrativen Konnexionen, die z.T. quer zur J/E-Scheidung verlaufen. So spielen z.B. 32,21-22 mit fünffachem פָּנִים auf die unmittelbar folgende Pnuel-Erzählung ("J") an. 33,8 greift sowohl 32,6 ("J") als auch 32,14b-22 auf, und vor allem die Parallele 33,10b // 32,31b ("J") bezieht die Begegnungen Jakobs mit Gott und dem Bruder bedeutungsvoll aufeinander. Die "Spannung" in 32,14 erledigt sich, wenn man (gegen KdV, 142) die Übernachtungsnotiz (wie auch sonst, z.B. Gen 28,11; Ri 18,2) als summarische Vor-Angabe liest (und mit dem Erzähler offen läßt, ob Jakob in der Dämmerung, bei Mondlicht oder Feuerschein agierte). V. 22b "nimmt" nach der Entsendung der מַחָה diese Notiz "wieder auf" — entweder als redaktionelle "Wiederaufnahme" (J.L. Ska) zur Einfügung einer auf die Pnuelepisode bezogenen Erweiterung oder (wahrscheinlicher) als Mittel der szenischen Gestaltung durch den Erzähler. Wer gegen solche Texturen hier an der Quellenscheidung festhalten will, muß insbesondere die narrativen Bezüge auf die Pnuelepisode zu zufälligen Kongruenzen deklarieren (so W.-W.; Noth hätte für diesen Fall immerhin noch seine Quelle "G"); freilich löst er damit zugleich das hintergründige Sinngefüge auf. Wo liegt die Beweislast?

Was erbringt die Arbeit im Blick auf den "State of the Pentateuch"? Angesichts der angedeuteten Gravamina jedenfalls *nicht* das, was man am ehesten erwarten möchte: eine *Klärung* alternativer Positionen und ihrer Voraussetzungen. Hierfür wäre im übrigen auch der Horizont über den begrenzten Textbereich der Jakoberzählung hinaus auszuweiten gewesen. Immerhin hätte sich bei Gen 25; 27-33 die Möglichkeit geboten, paradigmatisch die Frage der ursprünglichen Eigenständigkeit dieser Erzählkomposition (in Analogie zur Hofgeschichte Davids, zur Jehugeschichte oder dem Elischa-Zyklus etc.) zu überprüfen, und damit das herkömmliche Konzept eines "J" auch in seiner flexibelsten Version. Aber noch einmal: ausgerechnet diese Grundfrage wird nicht thematisiert!

Gerade auch im Blick auf Noth wäre sodann über die internen Textanalysen hinaus die Einbeziehung historischer Fragen unabdingbar. Dies gilt z.B. für die religionsgeschichtliche Destruktion der Vätergott-Hypothese von A. Alt, mit der ein wesentlicher Teil von Noths Überlieferungsgeschichte der Erzvätertraditionen hinfällt und die nicht ohne weitreichende Konsequenzen für die literargeschichtliche Verortung der Verheißungstexte der Genesis und für deren Kompositionsgeschichte bleibt. Cf. dazu bes. M. Köckert, *Vätergott und Väterverheißungen. Eine Auseinandersetzung mit Albrecht Alt und seinen Erben* (FRLANT 142; Göttingen 1988).

Abgesehen von alledem, entbehrt die antipodische Gegenüberstellung ausgerechnet von M. Noth und E. Blum insofern nicht einer gewissen Ironie, als Blums Gesamtansatz sich im Fragehorizont (Verständnis von "Überlieferungsgeschichte") und darüber hinaus gerade M. Noth in besonderer

Weise verpflichtet weiß, hat doch seine kompositionsgeschichtliche Erklärung des Pentateuch ihre nächste Parallele im Modell des "Deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerks", mit dem Noth die "Quellenscheidung" in den Vorderen Propheten ersetzte. Sollte eine solche kritische Rezeption weniger im Erbe von M. Noth stehen als seine mehr oder weniger getreue Reproduktion?

Eine Bemerkung zum Schluß: Involvierte Autoren als (Leser und) Rezensenten sind gewiß eine besondere Spezies. "Ausgewogenheit" ist nicht das, was man vorrangig bei ihnen erwarten wird, eher schon eine gewisse "Hellhörigkeit". Diese mag immerhin helfen, eine alte, im akademischen Betrieb aber immer öfter vernachlässigte Erfahrung wachzuhalten: Darstellungen aus zweiter (und oft: dritter etc.) Hand ersetzen nicht die Lektüre der Originale! Das bestätigt jedenfalls auch die vorliegende Arbeit.

Mühlingstraße 23  
D-69121 Heidelberg

Erhard BLUM

John J. COLLINS, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*. Edinburgh, T&T Clark, 1997. xii-275p. 14 x 21,5. £14.95

Il Collins è un studioso specifico della letteratura del giudaismo ellenistico e, quindi, preparato per darci uno studio d'insieme, come questo, sulla sapienza giudaica in età ellenistica.

In questo libro il Collins ci presenta la storia della sapienza giudaica, della sua importanza e della sua novità in periodo ellenistico, attraverso l'esame dei Proverbi, l'Ecclesiaste, Giobbe, il Siracide, la Sapienza di Salomone, le Sentenze dello Pseudo-Focilide. Le Sentenze dello Pseudo-Focilide sono spesso trascurate in simili trattazioni generali, il Collins, invece, in un confronto con Ben Sira, ne fa risaltare le concordanze e le discordanze, soprattutto in relazione alla valutazione della donna, del matrimonio e delle aberrazioni sessuali. Anche l'ambiente ellenistico greco e romano è sempre puntualmente ricordato, e la letteratura profana di quel periodo viene sempre messa a confronto con Flavio Giuseppe e con Filone.

Per la datazione della *Sapientia Salomonis* il Collins non si decide per un periodo preciso, ma pensa a uno spazio di tempo di circa un secolo, cioè dal 30 a. C. al 70 d. C.; il Winston (*The Wisdom of Solomon* [New York 1979]), al quale il Collins spesso si appoggia, ricorda che ogni ricerca sulla datazione non può prescindere dal termine *κράτησις*, da me messo come sicuro punto di riferimento già trent'anni fa.

Lo Ziegler è citato solo come editore del *Siracide* greco, mentre doveva essere ricordato anche per la *Sapientia Salomonis* (Septuaginta. Vetus Test. Graecum xii/1 [Göttingen 21980]); con l'edizione dello Ziegler il Collins avrebbe discusso meglio qualche sua scelta, come, per es., Sap 2,23-24.

Per l'«incorruttibilità» (*ἀφθαρσία*) che figura nella Sapienza tre volte, come ricorda il Collins (186), avrei osservato che il termine, che manca nei LXX, è presente due volte nel Libro quarto dei Maccabei, dove una frase riporta l'*ἀφθαρσία* alla virtù, cioè la considera un premio: ὥπερ ἐν πυρί

μετασχιζόμενος εἰς ἀφθαρσίαν, «(il martire) come se il fuoco lo trasformasse per (raggiungere) l'incorruttibilità» (4 Mac 9,22). Questa concezione accomuna i due autori e anche Filone (*Abr.* 55) opportunamente citato dal Collins. Tuttavia, poiché il testo della Sapienza dice: «Dio credè l'uomo per l'incorruttibilità (ἐπ' ἀφθαρσίᾳ)», il testo più vicino di Filone è *Somn.* 1,181.

Nelle pagine dedicate alla φιλοανθρωπία (218 e seguenti) l'informazione è sicura. A completamento suggeriamo al lettore anche un *excursus* molto documentato dello Spicq, "La philanthropie hellénistique, vertu divine et royale", *Les Épîtres pastorales* [EB; Paris 1947] 657-676; in questo *excursus* molto posto è dato a Filone.

A p. 206 per μάταιοι φύσει di Sap 13,1 si dà la traduzione, del resto corrente: «Vain by nature», traduzione che a noi sembra discutibile; φύσει che qualifica un aggettivo significa «molto» o meglio «in realtà», cfr. Aristoph. *Plut.* 118: ἄθλιος φύσει e Xen. *Cyn.* 12,15: φύσει οὗτοι κάκιστοι che lo Sturz (*Lex. Xen.*) glossa con *possit explicari longe pessimi*; cfr. anche il nostro «naturalmente» che non significa «secondo natura»; il riferimento fatto dal Winston a Philo *Decal.* 59 non è pertinente: ἀδιδάκτω τῇ φύσει, è «la natura restia ad imparare», una natura inadatta all'ammaestramento; qui τῇ φύσει non qualifica alcunché, ma la φύσις viene qualificata quale ἀδιδάκτος. Tutta la parte, comunque, riguardante la idolatria è bene informata e riportata all'ambiente egiziano, anche se c'è da pensare che non fossero del tutto esenti da superstizione gli stessi giudei.

Nelle note il Collins ha disseminato osservazioni linguistiche di grande utilità, servendosi di una bibliografia qualificata, v., per es., a p. 192 sulla legge naturale, a p. 193 per αὐτοσχεδίως; alle p. 112 e 126 sulla sapienza in Qumran. Così buone pagine sono dedicate al valore storico-geografico del termine πολίτευμα e al valore del termine «alessandrino» con i suoi limiti e le sue ambiguità (140). Alla lettera di Claudio agli Alessandrini il Collins riserva lunga e informata trattazione, con attenzione al valore politico del documento; avrei ricordato l'articolo di un grande storico italiano Gaetano De Sanctis, "Claudio e i Giudei d'Alessandria", *Rivista di Filologia e di Istruzione Classica* N.S. II (1924) 473-513.

L'aspetto missionario di questa letteratura giudeo-greca è oggetto delle pagine 154 e seguenti, dove alla base è messa giustamente la frase di Sap 18,4: i figli d'Israele volevano dare al mondo la luce incorruttibile della legge (τὸ ἀφθαρτον νόμου φῶς); è quella legge per cui muoiono i Macabei: per non privare le genti di quella luce (e 4 Mac 13,9 non andava dimenticato).

A p. 155 la citazione di Filone *Spec. leg.* 2,282 è sicuramente errata. Bizzeti è sempre citato Bizzetti. Del Beauchamp è citato solo l'articolo "Le salut corporel dans le livre de la Sagesse", *Bib* 45 (1964) 491-526; utile poteva essere anche "La cosmologie religieuse de Philon et la lecture de l'Exode par le livre de la Sagesse: le thème de la manne", *Philon d'Alexandrie. Lyon 1966. Colloques nationaux du Centre national de la recherche scientifique* (Paris 1967) 207-219.

In conclusione, il lettore si sarà facilmente accorto che le nostre osservazioni sono del tutto marginali e che il Collins ci ha dato uno studio d'insieme, sulla sapienza giudaica in epoca ellenistica, molto equilibrato,

bene informato, con soluzioni scelte sempre fra quelle più probabili. Non contento del volume, egli ha continuato ad indagare quel mondo greco così ricco e poliedrico della Bibbia fattasi greca e della teologia arricchitasi della speculazione classica, e così, anche recentemente, è apparso in *CBQ* 60 (1998) 1-15 un suo articolo dal titolo "Natural Theology and Biblical Tradition: The Case of Hellenistic Judaism", dove è costante il ricorso alla *Sapientia Salomonis* e il confronto col pensiero greco.

Via Emilia, 8  
25125 Brescia

Giuseppe SCARPAT

Helmut ENGEL, *Das Buch der Weisheit* (Neuer Stuttgarter Kommentar – Altes Testament 16). Stuttgart, Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1998. 322p. 13 x 20. DM 56 – ÖS 409 – SFr 53,—

Commentaries are particularly susceptible to over-criticism. The amount of ground that needs to be covered when commenting on an entire book precludes full, or even adequate, treatment of every issue encountered therein. The interpretation of any one part must take into account a daunting myriad of background factors that form the setting of that passage. The Book of Wisdom is as challenging as any book of antiquity. It was written in a world in which Jewish and Roman politics collided, and Hellenism exerted its influence on Jewish self-identity. The thoroughly Israelite notions of Yahwistic wisdom and the Exodus experience, which form the heart of the book, are communicated to a people living in such a changing and tumultuous world.

We are reminded by this complexity that any commentary on the Book of Wisdom can only be evaluated in terms of its stated purpose. The Neuer Stuttgarter Kommentar series is directed at bringing solid biblical scholarship into conversation with the spiritual needs of a lay audience. In H. Engel's own words: "Der Kommentar sollte ihnen helfen, sich, von Verständnisschwierigkeiten unbehindert, durch dieses Buch treffen, in ihrem Glauben stärken und zur Hoffnung ermutigen zu lassen" (9). As such, Engel's aim in this commentary is not innovation but substance, clarity, and spiritual growth. Engel is hugely successful in this task, and his commentary makes a wonderful contribution to this series. The author is learned and balanced in his exposition and skillful in presenting to a diverse readership the meaning of the Book of Wisdom in its setting. He clearly understands the many issues involved in interpreting this book, but his focus remains clear throughout.

Engel begins in the customary way, by treating the important introductory issues (13-44). He organizes these issues in six groups: (1) title and text; (2) poetic and rhetorical elements; (3) structure, genre, and main theological concepts; (4) author and audience; (5) canonicity; (6) the translation of Wisdom in the *Einheitsübersetzung*, which is the German translation upon which the commentary is based. His presentation of these issues is fair, thoughtful, and generally very helpful, although once or twice one might

wonder whether his intended audience would benefit equally from every section in the introduction. For example, to what extent would a lay readership be interested in poetic structure and of Greek rhetorical style (15-19)? But this is a minor point. Moreover, the decision to include this particular discussion no doubt stems from the purpose of the series to bring strong biblical scholarship to bear on how the laity understands the Book of Wisdom. It is also the case that a “lay audience” is a diverse phenomenon, and anyone who might feel burdened by such an academic discussion can safely move on. My only substantive criticism in this section concerns the author’s apparent acceptance of Lowth’s theory of poetic parallelism (synonymous, synthetic, and antithetic, see 15-16). Few would employ these categories to describe *Hebrew* poetry (which was Lowth’s focus) let alone Hellenistic poetry, which certainly influenced Pseudo-Solomon’s style. All in all, however, the introduction will certainly bring to non-academic readers a familiarity with Wisdom and the world in which that book arose.

The commentary itself (45-312; the table of contents has 319, which is a misprint) is divided into three sections, which reflect the author’s understanding of the structure of the book. This three-fold division is common to many commentaries: 1,1-6,21; 6,22-11,1; 11,2-19,22. Although specifics can be debated (I prefer a two-fold division beginning at 10,1, which introduces the *Beispielreihe* of 10,1-21 and historical overview that continues through the end of the book), this division of the book is pedagogically beneficial. Engel’s comments are understandably succinct, which is, to be sure, a desired property in a lay commentary. He does not belabor points. Many issues of more specific interest but that are not central to the discussion are treated in a series of excurses, and this greatly aids the readability of this volume. Some of these excurses include exegetical points of interest and appear, indented and in smaller font, within the text of the commentary. For example, Engel gives an overview of the translation of the Hebrew root חָמַם (completeness) in the LXX and NT (49-50) in conjunction with his comments on 1,1.

It is in this format that Engel also reproduces a number of extra-biblical texts that provide fruitful bases of comparison with Wisdom. For example, his discussion of the *carpe diem* passage (2,6-9) is supplemented by drawing on a variety of ancient Near Eastern texts that present a similar idea (68-70). Extra-biblical texts are given in twenty-one places throughout the commentary. Other excurses (seven in all) are neatly and clearly set off from the surrounding material in shaded boxes (e.g., “‘Righteousness’ in the Hellenistic-Egyptian Environment and in the Book of Wisdom” 58-63; see Engel’s comments on Wis 1,15). Readers even glancing through these sections will generally find that they are worth the effort to read more carefully. The table of contents is very helpful in directing the readers to where these excurses are found.

Moreover, the many topics Engel treats in these excurses are of benefit for the scholar as well. Again, the goal of this exposition is not innovation. Nevertheless, these excurses provide helpful overviews and reminders of the many important and difficult issues that must be kept in mind when engaging the Book of Wisdom. In this respect, this work is a commendable contribution to the study of the Book of Wisdom that is worth consulting by academics as well.



The commentary fittingly concludes with four indexes (313-322). The first is a list of eight passages in Wisdom that have been used in prayers and songs of the Roman Catholic church (e.g., Wis 1,7 is used as the opening verse in the liturgy of Pentecost Sunday). The second is a list of passages that are read as part of the daily readings in the Roman Catholic mass. Both of these list clearly have a rightful place in a commentary written for the benefit of the Catholic laity. The third, perhaps more pertinent for a more ecumenical readership, is an index of names and technical terms used throughout the commentary. This list strikes one, perhaps, as a bit too brief. Why, for example, is *litotes* mentioned but not *sorites* or *anaphora*? All three are elements of Greek rhetoric and are mentioned on 16-17, but only the first is included in the index. Finally, Engel includes a select bibliography of important ancient texts, monographs, commentaries, and more recent works. This bibliography includes works not only in German but Italian, English, and French. One wonders whether a bibliography containing more German works would have better served the readers of this volume.

My overall impression of this volume is, therefore, very positive and I recommend the book highly. I would, however, like to add a comment or two with respect to possible contemporary spiritual benefit of the Book of Wisdom, which is the focus of the commentary. There are several questions one could address in this regard that might add greater theological depth to the discussion. It is worth asking, for example, *why* Pseudo-Solomon spends so much of the book reviewing Israel's history (beginning in 10,1). And why is most of that space devoted to the Exodus and wilderness period? To be sure, it is to encourage the readers who are no doubt enduring some form of persecution (32-33). The question remains, however, why the Exodus experience in particular is chosen to bear this pastoral burden.

It seems that 3,2 and 7,6 suggest a broader context for this discussion. There the author refers to the passage from this life to the next as *ἐξοδος*. In view of the context of persecution of this book, this is significant. It seems that the reason why the author spends so much time on the Exodus in the second half of the book is because that event in Israel's past has tremendous theological relevance for his own readers who are going through an "exodus" of their own described in the first half: departure from this world to another at the hands of Roman persecution. This also helps us understand the unity of the Book of Wisdom. What unites the distinct parts of the book is the Exodus theme. Israel's history, beginning with Adam (10,1) but in particular the Exodus (beginning in 10,15) are used by the author as object lessons for his own readers who are in danger of leaving the faith of their ancestors. The theological message of the book may be summarized: "God has always been faithful to his people in the past and he will be so now to you as well". Or to use Pseudo-Solomon's own words in closing the book: "For in every way (κατὰ πάντα), O Lord, you have exalted and glorified your people. At every time and in every place (ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ καὶ τόπῳ) you have not neglected to help them" (19,22).

Wis 19,22 is a summary statement for the book as a whole: God never neglects his people. It matters little what the circumstances are; he is with them κατὰ πάντα. Nor is God's saving power relegated to a bygone era; he is with his people ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ. And God's saving power knows no boundary;

he is with his people ἐν παντί τόπῳ even death. God has always been with his people, for absolutely nothing, neither time, place, nor circumstance, is outside of the reach of God's overarching plan and purpose, which will not be frustrated and will come to pass: "She [Wisdom] reaches mightily from one end of the earth to the other and she orders all things well" (8,1).

Such an understanding of the theology of the Book of Wisdom is, of course, only one person's opinion. Still, it is by engaging the theology of the book as a whole that brings contemporary readers closer to answering the question of why the book was written at all. The book exists to give spiritual strength to a persecuted people. Having a clearer understanding of that overarching purpose is an important point to consider when the topic turns to contemporary spiritual significance of the book.

None of this is to contradict Engel's efforts, but merely to add to them. In the never-ending quest for theological significance and contemporary relevance, Engel's reflections on the Book of Wisdom are a welcome addition.

Westminster Theological Seminary  
P.O. Box 27009  
Philadelphia, PA 19118

Peter ENNS

Tremper LONGMAN III, *The Book of Ecclesiastes* (NICOT). Grand Rapids – Cambridge, W.B. Eerdmans, 1998. xvi-306p. 17 x 24. \$35.00 – £22.99

Im ersten Teil seines Kommentars zum Buch Kohelet (1-40) behandelt L. Einleitungsfragen. In evangelikaler Tradition stehend weist er behutsam, aber doch deutlich darauf hin, daß der Autor des Buches nicht Salomo sein kann. Bezüglich einer exakten *Datierung* hält sich L. zurück. Der einflußreichen Spätdatierung in die zweite Hälfte des 3. Jh.s aufgrund der Sprache steht L. skeptisch gegenüber. Er sympathisiert mit D.C. Fredericks (*Qohelet's Language: Re-evaluating its Nature and Date* [ANETS 3; Lewiston – New York 1988]), der eine Datierung in vorexilische Zeit für möglich hält, auf keinen Fall aber später als exilisch datieren möchte. L. kennt die Arbeit von A. Schoors (*The Preacher Sought to Find Pleasing Words. A Study of the Language of Qohelet* [OLA 41 1992]), die sich kritisch mit der Frühdatering von D.C. Fredericks auseinandersetzt, konnte sie aber — wie er selbst sagt (14, n. 51) — nicht mehr voll berücksichtigen. Die Sprache ist nach L. kein sicheres Kriterium für die Datierung.

Mit besonderer Sorgfalt geht L. der Frage der *Gattung* nach. Bezugnehmend auf seine Dissertation "Fictional Akkadian Autobiography" (1991) versteht er das Buch als "framed wisdom autobiography" (17). Damit — so L. — steht es in einer zweitausendjährigen altorientalischen Tradition. Die formal engsten Parallelen bestehen zu "the Cuthean Legend of Naram-Sin (most probably written just before the Old Babylonian period), the Sin of Sargon text (neo-Assyrian) and an Adad-guppi autobiography (neo-Babylonian)" (19).

In Entsprechung zu den angeführten Autobiographien nimmt er für das ganze Buch eine dreiteilige Struktur an: (1) 1,1-11: Rahmen – Prolog; (2) 1,12–12,7: Kohelets autobiographische Rede; (3) 12,8-14: Rahmen – Epilog. Das Corpus des Buches gliedert er noch einmal in vier Teile: I. Autobiographical Introduction (1,12); II. “Salomon’s” Quest for the Meaning of Life (1,13–2,26); III. The Quest Continues (3,1–6,9); IV. Qohelet’s Wise Advice (6,10–12,7). Innerhalb dieser Teile kann L. keine weitere Ordnung erkennen. Zum Strukturmodell von A.D.G. Wright äußert er sich kritisch.

L. legt großen Wert auf die Unterscheidung zwischen dem Erzähler (“frame narrator”) (1,1-11; 12,8-14) (= Autor) und der Person, die innerhalb der Erzählung (1,12–12,7) ausgiebig zu Wort kommt (= Kohelet). Damit greift er eine zentrale Einsicht von M.V. Fox (“Frame-Narrative and Composition in the Book of Qohelet”, *HUCA* 48 [1977] 83-106) auf. Im Unterschied zu M.V. Fox rechnet L. allerdings damit, daß Kohelet eine wirkliche Person war und nicht nur eine literarische Erfindung des Autors. Der Autor “Ecclesiastes” ist ein namentlich nicht bekannter Weisheitslehrer, der sich kritisch mit der Ansicht Kohelets auseinandersetzt. L. hält die Rahmung des Buches durch den Autor für sekundär. Demnach müßte ihm Kohelets autobiographische Rede (1,12–12,7) vorgegeben gewesen sein. Allerdings ist sich L. in dieser Frage auch nicht ganz sicher. Wenn der Autor die Person Kohelet erfunden hat, was eine offene Möglichkeit ist, so könnte er das Buch in *einem* Zuge verfaßt haben (21 n. 75).

Entsprechend der Unterscheidung zwischen Autor/Erzähler und Kohelet geht L. die Frage nach der Theologie des Buches in zwei Schritten an. Zunächst fragt er nach der *Theologie Kohelets* (32-36), die sich in 1,12–12,7 findet. L. schließt sich ganz bewußt an die Reihe derjenigen Interpreten an, die Kohelet “negativ” verstehen: Kohelet betont die Sinnlosigkeit (“meaninglessness”) des Lebens, sieht in der Weisheit nur einen begrenzten Wert, hält den Menschen für unfähig, den rechten Zeitpunkt zu erkennen. Der Tod verdunkelt alles menschliche Tun, über den Tod hinaus gibt es keine Hoffnung für den Menschen, Kohelets Gott ist fern, gelegentlich indifferent und manchmal grausam. Die Freude, zu der Kohelet aufruft, ist begrenzt, sie ist ein Narkotikum, das den Menschen für die wahre Natur der Wirklichkeit unempfänglich macht. Auch die Gottesfurcht ist mehr Angst vor einem übermächtigen und gefährlichen Sein als Achtung und Ehrfurcht vor einer machtvollen und mitfühlenden Gottheit. Ausgleichende Gerechtigkeit kann von diesem Gott nicht erwartet werden. Doch die so von L. dargestellte Theologie Kohelets ist *nicht die Theologie des Buches*. Diese setzt sich vielmehr mit der zitierten Stimme Kohelets kritisch auseinander. Sie findet sich in 1,1-11 und 12,8-15, wendet sich von Kohelets Skeptizismus ab und führt den Schüler zurück zu einer Theologie, die mit dem übrigen Alten Testament übereinstimmt: zur Weisheit, zum Gesetz und zu den Propheten. Ähnlich wie im Buch Ijob, so wird im Buch Kohelet eine spekulative und zweifelnde Weisheit zitiert, um den Schüler vor einer solchen Weisheit zu warnen und sie am Ende schließlich als nicht annehmbar zu erweisen. In dieser Gestalt ist das Buch kanonisch und eine Zusammenfassung der alttestamentlichen Botschaft. Aus *neutestamentlicher Perspektive* gelesen zeigt Kohelet die Sinnlosigkeit einer Welt auf, die fern eines liebenden und sorgenden Gottes lebt.

Im Hauptteil, dem eigentlichen Kommentar (57-284), geht L. das Buch Perikope für Perikope in folgendem Dreischritt durch: kurze Einführung, Übersetzung mit relativ ausführlichen textkritischen und vor allem philologischen Anmerkungen, Vers-für-Vers-Kommentierung. Der Abgrenzung der Perikopen kann ich weitgehend zustimmen. Inhaltlich bewegt sich L. — wie bereits gesagt — auf einer Interpretationslinie, die die Lehre Kohelets insgesamt als Ausdruck einer Negativitätserfahrung versteht. Seine Gewährsleute sind vor allem J. L. Crenshaw, aber auch M. Fox. Der Gegenpol wird repräsentiert durch R. N. Whybray und W. Kaiser, von denen er sich deutlich absetzt (107 n. 88). Allerdings vertritt L. auch keine durch dialektische Theologie aufgeheizte Extremposition, wie man sie hin und wieder antreffen kann. Er interpretiert Kohelets Position als Plädoyer für ein begrenztes Maß an Freude. Diese ist eine Gabe Gottes und menschlicher Verfügung letztlich entzogen (108; 168). Allerdings betrachtet Kohelet auch dieses göttliche Zugeständnis als sinnlos. Zu Koh 3,12 schreibt L.: "If the bigger picture of life is inscrutable to human beings, then they are reduced to lesser goals. Once the search for ultimate meaning in life is thwarted, the best course is to seek the little, sensual pleasure of life. Qohelet communicates his conclusion by means of a variant of the *carpe diem* formula (...). The context and the language of the verse indicate that this conclusion is a statement of resignation, not enthusiasm" (121).

Ich muß gestehen, daß mein Kohelet-Verständnis insgesamt in eine andere Richtung geht. Eine differenzierte Auseinandersetzung mit der Position von L. kann an dieser Stelle nicht geleistet werden. Ich gestehe selbstverständlich ein, daß Kohelets Lehre nicht einfach als enthusiastisch oder optimistisch bezeichnet werden kann. L. hat meines Erachtens bei der Interpretation von 2,1-2 sehr schön herausgearbeitet, daß nach Kohelet Sinn ("meaning") nicht einfach durch Vergnügen ("pleasure") zu erlangen ist (88). Allerdings muß die Stellung dieser Perikope zu *Beginn* des autobiographischen Rückblicks berücksichtigt werden. Im weiteren Verlauf begegnet das Motiv der Freude ohne הכל-Urteil in einem explizit theologischen Kontext (3,10-15; 5,17-19; 8,15; 9,7-10). Dürfen diese Stellen im Lichte von 2,1-2 so negativ gesehen werden? Hier wird eine Grundsatzfrage der Kohelet-Exegese berührt, die im Rahmen dieser Rezension nicht diskutiert werden kann.

Der Kommentar enthält viele treffende Beobachtungen und insgesamt ausgewogene Urteile. Genannt sei die in der Forschung nur selten anzutreffende differenzierte Darstellung hebräischer Geschichtsauffassung bei der Kommentierung von 1,9 ("Nichts Neues unter der Sonne") (72), ferner die meines Erachtens richtige Interpretation des schwer verständlichen Verses 2,3 ("he kept his mind alert to evaluate possible benefits during the sensual experience", 93), weiterhin die Übersetzung des umstrittenen Verses 3,11 ("He also places eternity in their hearts", 112; 120), um nur einige Beispiele zu nennen. Der Kommentar überzeugt oft gerade dort, wo er die Mehrdeutigkeit des Textes eingesteht, verschiedene Verständnismöglichkeiten diskutiert und schließlich für die dem Verfasser am plausibelsten erscheinende votiert.

Das Buch weist allerdings auch einen Mangel auf, der nicht verschwiegen werden soll. L. hat die neuere deutschsprachige Kohelet-Exegese kaum oder

gar nicht berücksichtigt. Namen wie F. J. Backhaus, D. Michel, H. P. Müller tauchen nicht auf, W. Zimmerli und N. Lohfink nur zwei- bzw. dreimal, (die Arbeit von A. Fischer, *Furcht Gottes oder Skepsis? Studien zur Komposition und Theologie des Buches Kohelet* [BZAW 247; Berlin – New York 1997] ist wohl zu spät erschienen und die Habilitationsschrift von Th. Krüger, *Theologische Gegenwartsdeutung im Kohelet-Buch* [München 1990] leider nicht veröffentlicht.) Das bleibt natürlich nicht ohne Auswirkungen. So kommentiert er 1,2 mit den Worten "Everything is meaningless. Qohelet leaves nothing out. He cannot find meaning in anybody or anything" (65). L. scheint den Aufsatz von N. Lohfink, "Koh 1,2 "alles ist Windhauch" — universale oder anthropologische Aussage?", *Der Weg zum Mensch*. FS Alfons Deissler (Hrsg. R. Mosis – L. Ruppert) (Freiburg 1989) 201-216 nicht zu kennen, sonst hätte er nicht so ungeschützt sprechen können. Ähnliches gilt für die Interpretation von 7,1-14. Die Auslegung von D. Michel, der in 7,1-6a Zitationen gegnerischer Ansichten sieht, ist L. offensichtlich nicht bekannt. Überhaupt scheint er die Zitatentheorie nicht zu kennen (vgl. D. Michel, *Qohelet* [Erträge der Forschung 258; Darmstadt 1988] 27-33; Ders., *Untersuchungen zur Eigenart des Buches Qohelet* [BZAW 183; Berlin 1989] 126-137; L. Schwienhorst-Schönberger [Hrsg.], *Das Buch Kohelet. Studien zur Struktur, Geschichte, Rezeption und Theologie* [BZAW 254; Berlin 1997] 14-20; Ders., "Das Buch Kohelet", *Einleitung in das Alte Testament* [E. Zenger u.a.] [Stuttgart 1995, 31998] 339-340). So muß L. eine relativ starke Inkohärenz bezüglich des zentralen Themas, der Freude, konzidieren: "Indeed, it is difficult to put everything that Qohelet says about *pleasure* (*simḥah*) together. One strand of his teaching commends it (3:12, 22; 8:15; 9:7; 11:9, etc.), while another strand of teaching may be represented by: The heart of the wise is in a house of mourning, and the heart of fools in a house of pleasure (7,4)" (168-169). Folglich versteht er Kohelet als einen Weisen, der sich manchmal selbst widerspricht (183-184), "a confused man who doubts the traditions of his people" (184; ähnlich 204; 259). Wenn man heute diese Position vertritt, muss man sich meines Erachtens mit der Zitatentheorie auseinandersetzen, die genau dies mit gewichtigen Argumenten bestreitet. L. erwähnt sie mit keinem Wort.

So weist das Buch insgesamt doch eine gewisse Einseitigkeit auf. Die für die weitere Forschung wichtigste Anregung sehe ich – neben zahlreichen treffenden Einzelbeobachtungen – in der konsequenten Unterscheidung von Autor (1,1-11; 12,8-14) und Kohelet (1,12–12,7). Hier hat es sich die bisherige Kohelet-Exegese mit der literarkritischen Ausscheidung zweier Nachworte (12, 9-11.12-14) vielleicht doch etwas zu einfach gemacht.

Ein Stichwortregister, Autorenverzeichnis, Bibelstellenverzeichnis, ein Index hebräischer, aramäischer, persischer, griechischer, lateinischer, ugaritischer und akkadischer Wörter beschließen den Band.

Dr.-Karl-Fuchs-Str. 12  
D-94034 Passau

Ludger SCHWIENHORST-SCHÖNBERGER

Norman WHYBRAY, *Job* (Readings: A New Biblical Commentary).  
 Sheffield, Academic Press, 1998. 187p. 16 x 24. Cloth: £35.00  
 – \$57.50; paper £12.50 – \$19.50

In light of Whybray's death we are fortunate to have his commentary on Job in the series *Readings*. His concise and incisive exposition moves through each chapter of the Book of Job in broad brush strokes. At critical places he slows down to treat a variety of items, such as a major issue, pivotal Hebrew terms, ancient practices, or ancient ways of thinking. These details, however, do not obstruct the flow of the exposition for the lay reader.

In accordance with the format of *Readings*, little attention is paid to the genres that comprise a speech or to the numerous obscure Hebrew words found throughout the Book of Job. There are no footnotes, and seldom are variant readings of a text weighed. Exceptions like at 14,16 are necessary for the reader to follow the explanation. Throughout this work it is evident that Whybray has such a high regard for the received text of Job that even if space permitted, he would have been reticent to emend the text. Only in a few places does he allude to other interpretations of a passage. In such instances Whybray also states his interpretation, supporting it with a brief argument. For example, in considering the identity of Job's witness (16,19), he judges D. J. A. Clines' creative proposal that it is Job's cry personified (*Job* 1-20 [WBC 17; Dallas 1989] 390) as implausible. Then he proposes that it is God, being further evidence of "Job's ambivalent attitude towards God" (86).

Whereas commentators in the middle of this century found little in Job that came from the original author, e.g., G. Hölscher, *Das Buch Hiob* (HAT 17; Tübingen 1952), at the close of the century Whybray joins several scholars like N.C. Habel, *The Book of Job* (OTL; Philadelphia 1985) who hold to the book's essential unity. Whybray goes even further by positing that the Joban author penned the epic tale as well as all of the speeches, including those from Elihu. That author used prose for the story line and poetry for the complex emotional exchange among the speakers.

Whybray correctly demonstrates that the theme of wisdom ties ch. 28 both to the dialogue and the ensuing speeches of Elihu and Yahweh. This ode to wisdom particularly anticipates Yahweh's focusing on creation (chs. 38-39). Surprisingly, though, Whybray assigns this speech to Job, asserting that he "assesses the matter calmly, dispassionately, and at an elevated theological level" (21). While concurring that this ode ponders a primary theme of the Book of Job, it is hard to agree that it belongs in Job's mouth for the following reasons: (1) The structure and style of this ode are so markedly different from any of the other speeches, both before and after, that it is unlikely that it was ever a speech from any of the characters. (2) Job's focus, both immediately preceding (27,1-6) and following (ch. 31) this ode, is the establishment of his innocence, not on abstract wisdom. Thus for Job to take up a meditation on the wonders of wisdom in the middle of his expression of strong oaths, as the climactic statement of his resolve to pursue his lawsuit with God, would be an intolerable shift in direction. (3) The ideas in this ode are so similar to those in the Yahweh speeches that it appears to be from a voice outside the parties of the dialogue. (4) This ode passes judgment not only on the comforters, but

also on Job; so how could Job be the speaker? These points favor the possibility that in this ode the ancient author was inserting a personal judgment on the preceding dialogue as well as preparing the audience for the approach that Yahweh was going to take.

For Whybray the purpose of the Book of Job is the establishment of a higher view of God. As for the issue of human suffering, the Joban author, in Whybray's judgment, leaves this issue unresolved. In dealing with God the Joban author stresses that wrong views of God as articulated by Job's three companions are serious and need to be corrected. Their rigid teaching about retribution is not only untrue, it is blasphemous as demonstrated in God's requiring them to make expiating sacrifices (172). Conversely the Joban author teaches through Job, Yahweh, and the narrative, that God's ways are mysterious, beyond human scrutiny. God's "sovereign will is not to be questioned" (27). God has the freedom to act however he wants toward creatures on earth. In addition to this view of God two elements need to be added from Yahweh's first speech: God governs the earth 1) in wisdom as attested by the many occurrences of the terms "wisdom" (38,36.37; 39,17) and "understanding" (38,4.18.20.36; 39,17.26) and 2) with compassion as illustrated in God's sending rain to desolate places uninhabited by humans (38,25-27) and in God's showing concern for the well-being of animals that humans cannot tame (38,39-39,12).

Another teaching of this biblical book that should be stressed is the high view of humanity represented by Job. Unlike any other figure in texts from the Ancient Near East, Job holds on to his integrity in the face of suffering and ridicule from the community, confirming God's great confidence in him (1,8; 2,3). Under the harshest circumstances he shows that it is possible for a human to endure adversity without compromising one's integrity. Even more brazenly Job calls God into question as he proves that a human is able to persevere until God does answer. Moreover, God supports this high view of humans, for in questioning Job so intensely, God assumes that humans have the intelligence to gain a better understanding of the wisdom underlying the creation and evident in the manner of God's governing of the earth. Job's high standing is bolstered further by God's affirmation that he had spoken rightly about God (42,7). This pronouncement establishes that humans may win divine favor by asserting their integrity rather than by groveling.

Given how long and complex commentaries have become, students and interested lay readers welcome works like this volume that are grounded on solid exegetical study and at the same time engage them in the core thought of the biblical text. Moreover, since this volume on the Book of Job contains the thinking of a veteran scholar of Israelite wisdom, it has interest for advanced students of Job as well.

Azusa Pacific University  
Azusa, CA 91702 (USA)

John E. HARTLEY

## Novum Testamentum

Wolfgang WIEFEL, *Das Evangelium nach Matthäus* (Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament 1). Leipzig, Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1998. xxiv-497p. 17 x 23,5

Wolfgang Wiefel, former professor of New Testament at the universities of Halle and Leipzig, had worked on the synoptic gospel narratives for quite some time. In 1978 he accepted the responsibility of revising and replacing the commentaries on the three gospels by Walter Grundmann in the series "Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament". Wiefel's commentary on Luke was published in 1988. The present commentary was his second on the synoptics (To my knowledge it was his last commentary. He died on the 23rd of October 1998). It is more than a revision of its predecessor, being an entirely new commentary in its own right.

The preface to the commentary brings out two points that were important to Wiefel. Firstly, he wished to make use of the broad international debate among biblical scholars. Working against the tendency of employing literature mostly from one's own country, Wiefel states programmatically his intention also to include literature from outside of Germany. Secondly, the commentary is to serve the preaching of the church. His own experience in preaching had alerted him to the need of a proper exegetical basis for the proclamation of the church. The commentary, he insists, is to serve that purpose.

The introduction to the commentary indicates his main views on some general issues relating to the gospel. It contains six sections: discussions of the prominent place of the gospel in the canon, its use of Mark, of Q, of special material, the ancient references to the author, and a survey of recent scholarly work on the gospel.

Wiefel devotes a proportionally large space to describing the sources of Matthew. He adheres to the conventional opinion that the gospel of Mark, as a written text, was of foundational importance for Matthew. The author of Matthew structured his narrative in close adherence to the Markan outline; a conscious literary dependence is assumed. Wiefel also accepts the written character of Q, but avoids seeking the different layers of that source. He observes that Matthew employs it more freely than Luke. Actually Matthew uses the loosely connected Q sayings in his redactional work when he incorporates them into contexts where he either depends on Mark or develops his own theological concepts. The special M material consists, according to Wiefel, of units with no parallels in the two other synoptics. It cannot be assigned to a specific written source. The author's own elaboration of the M material varies; but one cannot speak of a general tendency to re-formulate the tradition in accordance with entirely new concepts.

The discussion of the ancient references to the author of the gospel of Matthew centers on Papias, since the others who referred to the issue were dependent upon him. Wiefel observes that the peculiar identification in the gospel of Matthew as a tax collector plays no significant role in Eusebius' famous report of what Papias had said concerning Matthew and his



compositional activity. The all-important matter for Papias was to trace the gospel back to one of Jesus' disciples; and since the gospel — the *logia*, according to Wiefel — came from one of Jesus' disciples, it simply had to be in "Hebrew". Papias was apologetically motivated, and Wiefel limits himself to describing that allegedly apologetical construction.

The introduction gives an impression of selectivity. Several items which are essential for the over-all approach to the gospel are left out altogether or touched upon only in passing. What kind of literary work is Matthew? The recent international debate on the genre of the gospels has left no trace in the commentary. How are we to structure the work as a whole? The discussion initiated by J.D. Kingsbury and developed by him and others by means of narrative methodologies is mentioned briefly; but we are left without any clear explanation as to how the various sections of the gospel interrelate.

When a detailed discussion of sources is presented without being linked to questions such as genre and structure, we run the risk of forgetting that the author of Matthew was, after all, more than a mere compiler and redactor of already existing material. The trend of studying the gospels as coherent narratives has probably come to stay in some measure, despite its slow recognition in some scholarly communities. Likewise, we have been informed in detail about our all too often anachronistic models of information technology imposed on the ancient procedures of speaking and writing. This has direct bearing on the issue of how the gospel authors employed written and oral "sources". Considering all we are now in a position to know of how texts were composed and recited in antiquity (that is, how written texts were constantly transmitted and presented orally again and again), a closer attention to the interplay of orality and literacy would help significantly in conceptualizing how the ancient author of Matthew went about creating a coherent narrative from various kinds of — as we call them — "sources".

To be sure, the survey of research mentions several other debated points and somewhat broadens the range of discussion. But Wiefel is mostly content to describe what others have done without bringing in his own judgement. Moreover, the survey, despite his laudable intention of taking into account the international scholarship on the gospel, suffers from its focus on German contributions. Why, for instance, is the commentary of W.D. Davies and D.C. Allison not included among the great commentaries of the 1980s and 1990s? Wiefel mentions only U. Luz, J. Gnllka, A. Sand and H. Frankemölle (21). D. Hagner's commentary is not even listed in the bibliography, to say nothing of some work written in yet other languages. The strong attention to older German contributions is confirmed as one reads through the footnotes throughout the commentary proper. Indeed, the provincial character of New Testament scholarship today is a serious dilemma, hindering real scientific dialogue and mutual exchange; and Wiefel has not overcome it.

He divides the commentary into nine large chapters following nine sections of the gospel: 1,1–2,23; 3,1–4,25; 5,1–9,38; 10,1–13,53; 13,54–20,28; 20,29–22,46; 23,1–25,46; 26,1–27,66; 28,1–20. Each chapter is entitled according to its main content and subdivided accordingly. Only in the chapters dealing with 1,1–2,23; 3,1–4,25 and 26,1–27,66 — the origin and childhood of Jesus, the account of the beginning of his activity, and the account of his suffering and death — do we find some broader comments on each section as

a whole. The other chapters focus from the beginning on the individual pericopes. The commentary of each pericope, in turn, provides a German translation, text-critical notes, a discussion of the form, the source(s) and the redaction of the pericope, and comments on various aspects of the individual verses, respectively. Bibliographical lists are given for larger as well as smaller sections. There are no excursuses.

After reading through the commentary, I am left with a somewhat atomistic impression. How do the structure and the content of the various sections relate to each other? What did the author of Matthew intend to do, generally speaking? Why did he compose another gospel narrative at all, being so familiar with, and dependent upon, the Markan one? Why did he not just supplement what he already knew and cherished? What were his leading and basic convictions? I had to search hard, and sometimes in vain, in order to learn more from Wiefel about the broader issues of the gospel. Perhaps that is due to the genre of the commentary; perhaps it is due to the scholarly state of research.

I have tried to keep in mind Wiefel's stated aim of serving the preaching of the church. It is not possible here to elaborate on the vital need for discussion of such statements. How do New Testament scholars best help the churches? What kind of commentaries are of most value to them? Suffice it to say that Wiefel would, in my opinion, have been more faithful to that intention had he, in introductory or concluding sections, presented us with a more consistent attempt to grapple with some of the larger issues mentioned above (including the coherency of the Matthean narrative), and less with the hypothetical reconstruction of sources and redaction. Does not the preaching of the church — once we take that as a starting-point of our work — profit more from a disciplined and learned explanation of how the present story was meant to unfold as it was read aloud to the first addressees (insofar as they can be reconstructed according to the commentator) than from detailed discussions of how the author redacted hypothetical sources of individual pericopes and verses? As we all know, these discussions are also reproduced in several other commentaries.

But this should not be the last word on the commentary. It certainly contains much valuable information. In a dense but perfectly readable fashion Wiefel conveys to the readers most of the relevant information needed to interpret the individual pericopes or verses in the light of proper historical circumstances. He feels most at home, as I have indicated, when he explains how the author redacted sources and intertwined various kind of material in a single pericope or verse. On occasion, one may disagree with Wiefel. Understanding the details of an ancient text and reconstructing its background is, after all, very difficult. Yet, Wiefel almost never brings out entirely novel ideas — for better or worse — but usually summarizes and takes his stand within the mainstream of German gospel research. The commentary is therefore indeed a "Handkommentar". The readers of Matthew can look up individual verses of interest. They will immediately receive a reliable account of the main factors that play a part in a historically oriented interpretation based on how the text was put together. As such, this commentary will have its place in churches as well as in future scholarly discussions about the gospel of Matthew.

Francis J. MOLONEY, *The Gospel of John* (Sacra Pagina 4).  
 Collegeville, MN, The Liturgical Press, 1998. xxii-594p. 16 x 23,5.  
 \$34.95

The goal of this work is essentially twofold. First, it seeks to fulfil the general purpose of the Sacra Pagina series, namely to “present basic introductory information and close exposition” (editor’s preface, ix). Second, it aims to clarify the gospel’s design: “This contribution to the series devotes particular attention to the *narrative design*...It attempts to trace the impact of the Johannine form of the Jesus story on a reader...The Johannine narrative falls into obvious blocks...(1:1-18,... 1:19-12:50,... 13:1-17:26... 18:1-21:25). There are, however, more subtle turning points in the narrative (2:1; 5:1; 11:1-4; 13:1; 18:1-3; 20:1; 21:1). At these moments in the narrative I will provide a general introduction to the section that follows. *In is in these introductions that the distinctive vision of this commentary unfolds*” (xii, emphasis added).

The exposition — the essence of the commentary — compares well with many other commentaries on John. Moloney respects the present order of the gospel, and does not waste undue time discussing imaginary redactional levels. He examines the text closely, links it with its narrative context, indicates a wealth of further relevant material, and draws all the data into comments and notes.

The details of this exposition are often noteworthy. For instance, the puzzling remark that Jesus did not baptize (4,2, contradicting 3,22; 4,1) arises from the fact that, while Jesus did indeed baptize, “both historically and for the Fourth Gospel the significance of Jesus did not arise from his baptismal ministry. He is the one who makes God known...Jesus must not be known and remembered as a baptizer...[So] the narrator...adds a comment withdrawing Jesus from such a ministry” (116). The bread-of-life discourse is “a homiletic midrash on [the] text... ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat’” (207). Martha is arrogant (328; cf. 339), and “Mary is the character in the story reflecting true faith” (330). Jesus weeps not from sadness but from frustration (331).

While emphasizing the commentary’s value and interest, it is necessary to indicate some reservations. These are primarily concerned not with specific details but with the two broader questions: introduction; and design, including the “distinctive vision”. First, the introduction. It is useful to reprint the headings: A. The Johannine literature. B. The author. C. “The Jews” in the fourth gospel. D. Approaches to the fourth gospel. E. The approach adopted in this commentary. F. The theological contribution and contemporary significance of the fourth gospel. G. The structure of the gospel.

Some aspects of the introduction are very helpful. The discussion of “the Jews” is both useful and insightful. Also very helpful is the account of the gospel’s theological contribution and contemporary significance. This is like a summary of the gospel’s reception - a thumbnail *Wirkungsgeschichte*.

There is some tension between sections B and E, between the history-oriented quest for the identity of the real author (B) and the more literary discussion (E) in which the real author plays just one part. For instance, the literary discussion suggests in passing that the real author may have been a

woman (14), but in B, which is focused on the real author, this possibility is never mentioned.

In sections A and D, when portraying the gospel's historical background, Moloney follows the hypothesis — as proposed by J. L. Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (Nashville <sup>2</sup>1979), and especially by R. E. Brown, *The Community of the Beloved Disciple* (New York 1979) — that within the early church there existed distinctive Johannine churches whose history can be constructed. Both sections (A and D) invoke some of the same authors on the same topics, and both cite 1 John 2,19 in full (4,13). There are tensions, however, between the two sections (3–5; 12–13). The first version, for instance, suggests that expulsion from the synagogue occurred at an early stage — *before* the development of Christology (3). The later version not only pinpoints the place of origin, Jerusalem; it also reverses the order of events — it places expulsion *after* much of the development of Christology (12–13). Perhaps this divergence reflects Moloney's sources — those who check the works of Martyn and Brown will find that they differ on which came first, expulsion or the development of Christology — but it leaves readers struggling not only for a clear idea of the truth but even for a clear idea of the hypothesis. Moloney makes no mention of the trenchant criticism to which such constructions have been subjected (e.g. J. Kügler, "Das Johannesevangelium und seine Gemeinde - kein Thema für Science Fiction", *BN* 23 [1984] 48–62); B.S. Childs, *The New Testament as Canon* [Philadelphia 1985] 483). The invoking of specific communities appears even more questionable in view of recent arguments that the gospels were written for all believers (R. Bauckham [ed.], *The Gospels for All Christians. Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* [Grand Rapids – Cambridge 1998]). Moloney in fact glimpses the need to regard John as written for all Christians, a process which could be accounted for by the simple hypothesis that one author deliberately wrote for the benefit of the whole church, but he holds to the vagueness of an elusive community process: "The Johannine Christians...[having] cross[ed] from one world to another...they inevitably, and perhaps unconsciously, produced a story of...Jesus that has addressed the perennial situation of *all Christians*" (22, emphasis added). From the entire history of literature Moloney does not cite any verifiable case of a book being produced by such a process. His model ("they...inevitably...perhaps unconsciously") comes not from literature but seems rather to reflect the early assertions of form-criticism.

The writing of the gospel is set in Ephesus, at the turn of the century (5). On John's relationship to the synoptics, Moloney's position is clear (3): "While once it was taken for granted that John knew the synoptic gospels and was rewriting them, nowadays the position...[of non-dependence] is widely accepted". This is close, both in content and tone, to the view of R.E. Brown in 1966 (*John I–XII* [AB 29; Garden City 1966] xlv). There is no reference to the leading publication on this issue (A. Denaux [ed.], *John and the Synoptics* [BETL 101; Leuven 1992]), and to Denaux's conclusion that by 1990 the tide had again turned: there is "a growing consensus about the hypothesis that the author of John was dependent on one or more of the Synoptic Gospels" (Denaux, *Synoptics*, xxii). Moloney (2–3) mentions a few of the recent works which link John and the synoptics, but he does not engage their arguments. He dismisses them for one reason: their "complexity". With such reasoning one

would have to dismiss many of humanity's greatest discoveries, inventions and artistic compositions — including much literature.

Having summarized what is essentially the historical hypothesis of R. E. Brown, Moloney then turns to his own approach, and at this point (13-20) he proposes a reading of the final text in light of recent literary theory. This is the most difficult section of Moloney's work, partly because literary theory itself is sometimes obscure, and partly because, while embarking on a literary approach, Moloney wishes to retain an historical emphasis. Obviously both aspects, literary and historical, are important, but, at a theoretical level, it is difficult to define how the two aspects interact. Eventually (19-20), Moloney wisely opts for an approach that is primarily pragmatic.

The invoking of literary theory finds its major test a few pages later — in the task of outlining the structure of the gospel (23-24). The test is all the more important because literary structure is integral to literary design, and design is central to Moloney's project (xii). In the event, Moloney's structure — major divisions begin with chaps. 2, 5, 11, 13, 20 and 21 — turns out to be largely the same as that of R. E. Brown (*John I-XII*, 1966, cxxxviii-cxli; *John XIII-XXI*, 1970, xiii-xiv; close comparison shows pervasive similarities in divisions and headings, but Moloney's version is more compact). The invoking of literary theory has made little difference.

It is not easy to judge Moloney's outline. Despite the clear similarities with Brown, Brown at this point is never mentioned. Moloney refers to "dissenting voices" — alternative proposals — but he does not engage them in any way. Nor are there any immediate arguments. Instead the reader is referred to "the detailed argument of the commentary, especially in the general introductions found at the beginning of each major section" (23). The first such introduction concerns Cana (2,1-11) (63-65; cf. 50-51). The argument here is elusive. Moloney sees the Cana episode as ambiguous: it belongs to what precedes (1,19-51); and it has links to the later Cana episode (4,43-54); it "acts as a bridge" (51). There is much truth in this, but it fudges the issue of criteria for making divisions in the text. Why ultimately does one allocate the bridge to one side ("Cana to Cana") rather than the other? And what happened to all the arguments for the side which loses out? As one goes through the commentary the criteria for dividing the text seem to change unpredictably. At one moment (63), for instance, "a change of place" (to Cana, 2,1) is treated as a criterion of division, but the next change of place (to Capernaum, 2,12) is not.

After "Cana to Cana" Moloney's next major division (165) is John 5-10: "Some scholars have attempted to interpret the Fourth Gospel on the basis of the feasts... but it is better to allow the context to determine the use of feasts rather than vice-versa. On the basis of this principle John 5-10 is dominated by Jewish feasts".

While emphasizing the feasts as a key to structure, Moloney (80) explicitly follows Brown (*John I-XII*, cxxxix) in discounting the structuring role of the most prominent feast of all — the thrice-recurring feast of Passover.

Structure may seem relatively unimportant; like a person's skeleton, it does not grip one's heart and imagination. But overall structure helps to set specific passages in context, and context is central to meaning. Occasionally

the unreliability of the proposed structure lends confusion to the discussion of particular pericopes – for instance, the transformation of the temple (in chap. 2), and the breakdown of believing (2,23-25). Furthermore, just as the skeleton is bound in with the shape and strength of the whole person, so a writing's structure is often inextricably linked to its essence. It is no accident that in indicating the location of his arguments on structure Moloney (23) directs readers to the same "general introductions" which are said to contain his "distinctive vision" (xii).

As with the structure's underlying rationale, it is not easy — at least not for this reviewer — to get a clear sense of what is meant by the commentary's "distinctive vision". An examination of the general introductions (63-65, 164-165, 322, 370-371, 481-482, 515-517, 545-547) shows much that is interesting and instructive, but little, if anything, that holds the whole body of material together. The nearest thing to a common thread seems to be the emphasis on "faith" (see, for instance, 65, 164, 516-517), but that in itself is not distinctive. It would have helped had the introduction given at least some minimal sense of this distinctive vision. In fact, it seems bizarre to emphasize literary theory and elusive history and not to give a solitary paragraph to the overall vision of the verifiable gospel.

There is a similar problem with the last discourse (chaps. 13-17). The introduction to it (370-371) refers briefly to its literary unity, but does not indicate the unity of its essential content — its vision. However, at the end (478), Moloney offers a substantive chiasmic summary of the discourse. (This chiasm is somewhat like the chiasmic proposal of Y. Simoens, *La Gloire d'Aimer. Structures stylistiques et interprétatives dans le Discours de la Cène (Jn 13-17)* [AnBib 90; Rome 1981] 52-80).

Ironically, there are aspects of a distinctive vision in a comment which is not an introduction — concerning the purpose of writing (20,30-31) (542-544). This comment offers a summary which seeks to depict how the narrative design of John 1-20 draws the reader towards increasing faith.

At the end, concerning chap. 21, Moloney (545-546) lists the reasons for regarding the chapter as an addition. He does not list the reasons for regarding it as integral.

There is much that is unresolved in this commentary, not only about the commentator's stance concerning the gospel's background, audience and vision, but above all in the methodology. The commentator is convinced, wisely, of the need for both *ancient history* and *literary sensitivity*, but the means chosen for fulfilling that need — R. E. Brown's historical constructions and modern literary theory — do not blend well and do not cover the key area in which such blending occurs, namely in *ancient literature*. There is no awareness, for instance, in the initial discussion of John's possible use of the synoptics, of how ancient authors used sources. And, at the end, in the discussion of the function of chap. 21, there is no awareness of the comparable function of one of the most famous climactic scenes in Greek literature: Xenophon's account of the Persian expedition finally reaching its place of well-being — the sea (*Anabasis*, Book 4, esp. chaps. 7-8). Despite occasional use of literary terminology, this commentary's promise of a fresh literary dimension remains essentially unfulfilled.

Overall then the commentary is hardworking, erudite, and often helpful,

but it does not have a grip on the material. It falls between an insecure attachment to R. E. Brown and a dim vision of an alternative approach. Moloney has done well yet has left himself much more to do.

Dominican Studium, Tallaght Village  
Tallaght, Dublin 24

Thomas L. BRODIE

Ben WITHERINGTON III, *Grace in Galatia*. A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Galatians. Grand Rapids, B.W. Eerdmans, 1998. xvii-477p. 16 x 23,5. \$37.50

Este volumen es el comentario más reciente a Gálatas. Como en otras obras del mismo autor encontramos aquí un análisis socio-retórico de esta carta, lo cual constituye su aportación más característica, si bien no es el primer comentario a este escrito paulino que utiliza el análisis retórico (vg. A. Pitta, *Lettera ai Galati* [Bologna 1996]). En todo caso este trabajo nos ofrece, entre otras cosas, una buena ocasión para reflexionar un tanto sobre los logros de las modernas metodologías en el campo de los estudios paulinos.

No es preciso detenerse especialmente en la presentación de la obra, dado que el género literario "comentario" es suficientemente conocido. Probablemente es más interesante discutir sobre ciertos aspectos metodológicos y sus resultados, pasando luego a puntos concretos que merecen mayor detención.

No será necesario aquí detenerse a ponderar las aportaciones de los métodos de análisis retórico y sociológico. Pero no es posible olvidar algunas limitaciones en su aplicación.

El punto de partida es determinar el género retórico de Ga. W. opta por el deliberativo/exhortativo (25-36) mientras Betz prefiere el forense/judicial/apologético y Pitta el epidíctico/demostrativo (Pitta, *Lettera*, 43-46). Un análisis de los argumentos que los respectivos autores ofrecen me hace inclinarme más bien hacia la postura de Pitta. Pero, a mi entender hay algunas cuestiones previas: ¿no sería, quizás, más operativo aceptar que en una misma carta puede darse una mezcla de distintos géneros retóricos? Cuando Pablo escribe Gálatas tiene varios puntos en su mente, algunos de los cuales — expuestos sin orden de preferencia — serían: que los gálatas no se circunciden ni judaicen y no se aparten, por tanto, del mensaje evangélico fundamental; para ello quiere defender su propia interpretación del evangelio y, para esto último, va a exponer una vez más — probablemente lo había ya hecho en su primera evangelización — sus puntos de vista sobre la salvación realizada en Cristo, la ley, la práctica etc. cosas todas que, de suyo, pertenecen a diversos géneros retóricos. Por ello quizás no haya que distinguir tanto entre tales géneros y optar necesariamente por uno solo de ellos para cada escrito, como W. hace (27). Paulatinamente se abre paso esta idea: es posible que Pablo utilice varios géneros en el mismo escrito (J.-N. Aletti, *Israël et la loi dans la lettre aux Romains* [Lectio Divina 173; Paris 1998] 36-39). ¿No será éste el caso de Gálatas?

Por otra parte, aceptar sin más las líneas de la retórica antigua tal como

un determinado autor hace — W. se refiere frecuentemente a Quintiliano como guía en estos temas — y aplicarlas a un escrito paulino, pudiera resultar no todo lo útil que se pretende para la comprensión de la carta en cuestión.

Porque hay otra cuestión de especial interés en cuanto a Gálatas: Dado el indudable tono apasionado del escrito, que nadie niega, ¿es lo más probable que Pablo planteara escribir una carta siguiendo cuidadosamente las reglas de un determinado estilo retórico? Usa desde luego los métodos retóricos de su ambiente que quizás conociera por su educación, pero de un modo muy personal. Ni siquiera podemos suponer previamente demasiados conocimientos retóricos en Pablo, sino los que aparecen de hecho en su obra. De ahí que quienes quieren emplear razonablemente este método partan de los datos concretos de cada escrito y no de suposiciones generales problemáticas (Pitta, *Lettera*, 36). Una hipotética retórica paulina plenamente planificada no es compatible con los demasiados defectos precisamente retóricos que se dan en esta carta; tales incorrecciones serían, quizás, admisibles en una *contio oratoria*, pero es posible que hubieran provocado serios reproches en los maestros al verlos en una obra que, en la hipótesis mencionada es preciso suponer como muy trabajada. Así vg. los anacolutos e incorrecciones estilísticas de 2,4-10. En resumen, partir de que Pablo haya compuesto Gálatas de forma totalmente coherente, desde la cual se encajan lógica y retóricamente todos los elementos probablemente es ir demasiado lejos. En efecto, parece más acorde con el conjunto de expresiones del escrito suponer una actitud polémica y agitada del Apóstol en el momento de escribir Gálatas. Efectivamente es una opción prácticamente previa, pero, a mi modo de ver, más apoyada en el texto. Esta actitud, obviamente, llevaría a una cierta incoherencia en la estructuración del escrito. Y, por otra parte, los diferentes análisis realizados hasta el momento a partir del texto mismo no han propuesto un esquema o estructuración de Ga que destruya la primera impresión de agitación y polémica que produce su simple primera lectura.

En mi opinión, *salvo meliore iudicio*, W. supone un discurso de Pablo excesivamente organizado en el sentido de retórica formal o formalista (vg. 171 sobre 2,15-21), dejando en un segundo término todos los sentimientos y pasión de Pablo. Los conoce (cf. vg. 96), pero quizás no se toman suficientemente en serio como ayuda interpretativa. Un modelo podría ofrecerlo, entre otros, Juan Crisóstomo, citado elogiosamente (201 n.8 entre otros lugares); era alguien que todavía vivía en un mundo cultural relativamente parecido al paulino, conocía los métodos retóricos del tiempo, pero no se dejaba apresar por ellos y entendía a Pablo, por así decir, “desde dentro”. Es bastante claro cómo en su comentario “empatiza” con el Apóstol además de comprender sus razonamientos. Este Padre, y otros, interpretan vivencial, existencial, instintiva, “connaturalmente” a Pablo, han entrado en sintonía con su pensamiento. Dado el carácter de su pensamiento, tan fuertemente ligado a sus experiencias personales y a su apostolado, este tipo de acercamiento parece importante para comprender lo que el Apóstol dice. Es evidente que ello no está exento de peligros de subjetivismo y que es menos controlable que otros métodos. Pero, ¿no es algo conveniente para intentar captar matices de afectividad y sentimiento que con dificultad aparecen en las meras expresiones retóricas? La correspondencia paulina estaba escrita más bien para que fuera entendida directamente por destinatarios no especialmente avezados a las sutilezas retóricas. Es obvio que



cuanto más se analice retóricamente, más posibilidades hay de objetivar y expresar lo que tales destinatarios captaban directamente. Pero sin menospreciar los demás aspectos.

Algunos ejemplos: el exabrupto de 5,12 es comprensible desde una sensibilidad mediterránea en que, entonces y ahora, expresiones de este tipo no son infrecuentes en el lenguaje coloquial mejor que con problemáticas alusiones o referencias a los ritos de castración de los sacerdotes de Cibeles; el sacarse los ojos para darlos a alguien (4,15) es una forma de decir popular frecuente en el ambiente y puede no pasar de ser una exagerada metáfora. Ha de notarse, en general, respecto a metáforas, imágenes y, de modo muy especial, a símbolos que no basta decir simplemente que lo son, sino es necesario captar su significado, lo cual implica sensibilidad y psicología y no un mero análisis intelectual.

En resumen, reconociendo el valor del método retórico no debe aplicarse de forma estricta y automática en cada momento, sino de forma más flexible. Cabe dejar paso a la comprensión directa que, en la literatura epistolar tiene una importancia apreciable.

En cuanto a los aspectos sociológicos, parece hora de plantearse si el concepto de "honor" era tan importante en el mundo mediterráneo tal como se ha venido diciendo desde las primeras obras de B. Malina entre otros. W. lo emplea con bastante profusión para explicar el enfoque que Pablo hace de sus relaciones con otros apóstoles en el contexto de una cultura agonística (47, 128-131, 140, 148-151). Me pregunto si no habrá aquí algo de proyección del competitivo ambiente norteamericano. Encuentro menos conveniente el empleo de esa categoría para comprender el tema de justificación (175). ¿Ayuda o más bien lo contrario?

Es también discutible el modelo "secta", aun haciendo las necesarias precisiones, para explicar la concepción paulina del movimiento cristiano primitivo (47) como un movimiento de reforma dentro del judaísmo. Si, además, se añaden los calificativos de "milenario" y de "conversión" (272-274) tendremos una imagen a mi juicio bastante deformada del cristianismo primitivo. Realmente creo que partir de esos términos y procurar ajustar posteriormente los datos paulinos a ello complica la explicación más que la aclara. Lo cual es un peligro que acecha un poco por doquier también en otros temas. Hablar, por ejemplo de la conversión de Pablo en términos de una "resocialización" (107-112) puede ser aceptable, con tal de que se tengan en cuenta los factores personales, psicológicos y de experiencia crística personal que también intervinieron en ese suceso. De hecho W., tras haber analizado el cambio en la vida de Pablo desde un punto de vista más bien sociológico y externo, vuelve a apelar a la experiencia de Cristo como factor determinante de dicho cambio y, consiguientemente, del evangelio de Pablo (113, 115).

Resulta problemático que la preocupación por la unidad de la comunidad tenga un papel tan importante como aparece en el comentario (vg. 379,389-392). Por otra parte el enfoque predominantemente sociológico de Ga 5,16-21 del que se deriva el importante puesto de la unidad en Pablo al escribir Gálatas, probablemente no hace justicia plenamente a la profundidad de las categorías "carne" y "espíritu" en el pensamiento paulino.

Pasando a aspectos más profundos, una observación inicial: probablemente el peligro fundamental de los análisis retóricos y sociológicos reside en

que pueden hacer olvidar el contenido teológico en toda su hondura en vez de ponerlo de relieve, si bien cabe desde luego un uso de tales métodos — y de otros — que evite este peligro (cf. Pitta, *Galati*, 24). Esto supuesto — y sin afirmar que ello sea la única causa directa de cuanto diré a continuación, hay que profundizar más en cuanto Pablo dice en Gálatas acerca de la ley y su función. Afirmaciones sobre la concepción paulina acerca de la ley como las de la mala experiencia que el Apóstol podía tener acerca de los efectos de su observancia (280, 293), o bien que la ley tenía una función social de establecer límites de identidad entre el pueblo judío y el resto (344-346) y el que su función era la de guardián y pedagogo (262-267), y que Pablo la rechaza porque en la economía divina ha quedado obsoleta (354) han de completarse percibiendo la radicalidad de las afirmaciones paulinas en 2,16.19; 3,10-13.19. W. realiza en parte esta tarea en 351 y 354, pero probablemente se puede ir más lejos en una línea que W. descarta demasiado rápidamente (356-357).

En efecto, lo que W. llama “revolución copernicana” en la interpretación de Gálatas, es decir, la idea de que, en esa carta, Pablo no trata como punto central de la relación del ser humano con Dios — llámese justificación o filiación — no acaba de convencer y sigue teniendo vigencia, en mi opinión, la interpretación de Lutero y de tantos otros intérpretes.

Para hacerse cargo de la concepción paulina sobre la ley el punto central es percibir que Pablo habla de ella desde la experiencia de la salvación conseguida en Cristo. Es preciso subrayar que Pablo ha caído en la cuenta de la radicalidad y hondura de esta nueva relación con un Dios al que se puede llamar “Abbá” y todo cuanto ello conlleva. Para establecer esa relación la observancia de la ley, la misma ley, es absolutamente incapaz por obvias razones. De ahí que la descarte totalmente y rechace cualquier tipo de acercamiento a ella que implique confianza en esa capacidad en detrimento de la total confianza y unión con Cristo. W. es, al menos en parte, consciente de este punto (342-343) pero quizás no sea del todo coherente con esa apreciación al intentar “salvar algunos aspectos positivos de la ley en cuanto tal” (343). Sin embargo, la liberación/libertad de la ley es tan radical que Pablo mismo cuenta con la posibilidad de que algunos de sus destinatarios saquen consecuencias desacertadas en la línea de libertinaje ético (Ga 5,13).

Esto supuesto, sorprende la importancia que W. concede al *hapax* “ley de Cristo” como resumen de la postura paulina (418-430 y *passim*). Supuesto el ambiguo empleo paulino de “*nomos*” (cf. Rm 7,21-23 y 8,2 entre otros textos), y la escasa matización que Pablo hace en Gálatas en su distanciamiento de la ley, no parece adecuado tomar esa extraña expresión como cifra y resumen de la postura paulina.

La ética paulina a partir de Ga 5,13 es otro tema importante. Sorprende también el continuo recurso de W. a Aristóteles tanto en cuanto a lo retórico como a lo ético como clave interpretativa. ¿Estarían los gálatas y aun el mismo Pablo tan familiarizados con el pensamiento del Estagirita como para apelar a él? La cuidadosa contraposición establecida (400-401) entre las listas de vicios y virtudes supone nuevamente una precisión en la mente de Pablo quizás demasiado grande dado el tono general agitado del escrito. Pero lo más llamativo es la virtual ausencia del papel del *pneuma* en la interpretación que W. hace de la ética paulina, sobre todo si se compara a la importancia que concede a los aspectos sociológicos.

Hay puntos menores en comparación con lo expuesto hasta ahora. Mencionaré algunos: W. coloca Ga aproximadamente en el año 49 lo que hace de este escrito el primero de los paulinos. Los argumentos para una opinión no excesivamente frecuente ni aceptada son más bien externos, muchos de ellos "*ex silentio*" y sujetos a diversas apreciaciones. Dada la actual investigación sobre Hechos de los Apóstoles, este libro no es enteramente descartable en cuanto fuente histórica, lo que es uno de los necesarios presupuestos para colocar Ga en una fecha tan temprana. A mi entender sería interesante que hiciera intervenir también en la argumentación el pensamiento que aparece a lo largo del escrito y los acontecimientos que supone, así como su conexión con el resto del pensamiento paulino, en especial con Romanos.

c/Fernando el Católico 63 6° D  
E-28015 Madrid (España)

Federico PASTOR-RAMOS

### Varia

Nikos KOKKINOS, *The Herodian Dynasty. Origins, Role in Society and Eclipse* (Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha – Supplement Series 30). Sheffield, Academic Press, 1998. 518p. 16 x 24. Cloth: £55.00 – \$85.00

The Herodians of Judaea remain the best documented yet most enigmatic of the Hellenistic dynasties. The quantity of source material is extensive: the great history of Nikolaos of Damaskos, renowned as *polybiblos* (Athenaios 6.54), devoted as many as 30 books to the dynasty's most notable figure, Herod the Great, as well as examining the careers of his parents and children. Nikolaos' work, Herod the Great's own memoirs, and other contemporary writings formed the nucleus of the lengthy histories of Flavius Josephus, himself an observer of and participant in the world of Herod's great-grandchildren. An increasing amount of epigraphic material is also extant, especially valuable for the fortunes of the dynasty outside of Judaea and after the period of Josephus. The New Testament is also a major source. The result is that over a hundred Herodians are known, mostly from the first century B.C. and the first century AD. By contrast, the two other most important contemporary dynasties are frustratingly shadowy, with knowledge of only two dozen Kappadokians and seven Mauretanians, clear proof of the vastness of the information on the Herodians.

Yet they remain enigmatic. Caught up in both Jewish and Christian issues, the Herodians have been studied more as theological figures (and even elements of popular imagination) than as prominent personalities of the Hellenistic and Roman political and cultural world. This uneven emphasis has limited the dimensions of study: until recently, classical scholars had surprisingly little to say about the Herodian world, especially its relationship to Rome: the scant mention of Herod the Great in Ronald Syme's *Roman Revolution* (Oxford 1939) is a case in point. Archaeology at Herodian sites has followed a similar pattern of an elucidation of religious themes rather than Roman cultural issues, with the additional problem of too many unpublished and amateur excavations. Thus a balanced view of the dynasty has heretofore been impossible.

Now Nikos Kokkinos in this impressive and fundamental work has made a major step, perhaps the largest ever, in creating a full picture of the remarkable Herodian family. By emphasizing ethnicity rather than religion, Kokkinos has established a new understanding of the complex world of Hellenistic/Roman Judaea. By moving away from an emphasis on Herod the Great, he has opened up the world of the Herodians, their Idumaean origins, and their complex interactions. He has acknowledged the "tentative" and "fragmentary and varied nature of the enormous amount of evidence" (342), but this has not prevented him from using all the available material to create a rich and varied view of the family, and to make a number of brilliant speculations.

After an introduction detailing the evolution of attitudes toward the family, particularly Herod the Great, since antiquity, Kokkinos' opening chapters concern questions of ethnicity and the population of Idumaea in the Hellenistic period, issues fundamental to an understanding of why the Herodians became such a dynastic and cultural force in the eastern Mediterranean world. He has skillfully demonstrated that by the late Hellenistic period the inhabitants of Idumaea were a thoroughly mixed population of virtually every possible ethnic background, with especially strong Greek influences. Kokkinos moreover has shown that these "Idumaeans" populations were, by the late Hellenistic period, not limited to the traditional or biblical land of Edom/Idumaea, but had spread to the coast, thus fostering external (largely Greek) contacts and a mingling of ethnic strands. Building on Josephus' well-known statement (*BJ* 1.123) that the Herodians were Idumaeans, Kokkinos thus has proven that this means they were of mixed ancestry, and that the tradition of an Askalonian origin of the family, often dismissed as an early Christian slander, is to be taken seriously. He has theorized that the hometown of Herod the Great was perhaps Marisa — one wonders, if this be so, why Herod did not build there — but that nearby Askalon, where Herod had his only palace outside his kingdom, was effectively the ancestral seat. Kokkinos' arguments are compelling, to say the least, and do much to explain the family's later attitudes, especially their ambivalence to Jewish culture (despite their forced conversion) and the intense Hellenistic-Roman orientation of both Herod and his descendants (343). Certainly the issue of mixed ethnicity is a powerful one for the Hellenistic world. It is far from having been thoroughly examined, as there has long been a tendency to see individuals as "Roman", "Greek" or "Jewish", without realizing that even those cultures which professed ethnic purity were more racially complex than would usually be admitted. This was especially true within the Hellenistic dynasties, which intermingled Greek, Persian, Italian, and local strains, Greek and Persian from the time of Alexander the Great, and Italian through the prolific efforts of Marcus Antonius and others. The result was individuals such as Ptolemaios, grandson of Antonius and Kleopatra, who as Roman client king of Mauretania in the first century AD could boast of his Greek, Roman, and North African ancestry. As Kokkinos noted (342), ethnic or cultural identity is an essential element of the impact of Hellenization on local cultures and is the key to understanding the Herodians.

After outlining these issues of ethnicity in late Hellenistic Idumaea, Kokkinos has then embarked on a detailed treatment of the Herodians. He has been able to identify 144 members of the family, 111 by name (Appendix 1) — more than previously known — beginning with Herod the Great's eponymous great-grandfather of the early second century B.C. and continuing to various descendants of the second century AD. Many of the names are familiar even to casual scholars of the Hellenistic/Roman Levant: Herod the Great, of course, and his sons Antipas and Philip (of New Testament fame), the two Agrippas, Berenike (the paramour of the emperor Titus), and even Salome, who danced for the head of John the Baptist. Less well known but no less essential to dynastic fortunes are

Herod the Great's father Antipatros, whose services to Julius Caesar gained crucial Roman citizenship for himself and his descendants, and Herod the Great's formidable sister, another Salome, by far the most intriguing female member of the dynasty. Kokkinos' study of her (177-192) is the best to date of this fascinating personality. Members of the dynasty ruled outside of Judaea, either by marriage or descent: two were kings of Armenia, and others were kings of Chalkis and Kilikia. The Roman procurator Felix, the opponent of Paul of Tarsos, married into the family (Acts 24,24). Perhaps one of the most intriguing Herodians, and a fine example of their importance and diversity, was Alexandros of Kilikia (great-great-grandson of Herod the Great), who, after his kingship in Kilikia, entered the Roman Senate and eventually served as consul in the early second century AD. In all, as many as ten generations can be documented, giving the Herodians a known time span as long as the Ptolemies of Egypt. Their geographical range was also impressive, wielding their political and cultural sway over much of the Roman East, from Armenia to Italy. The most visible cultural product of the dynasty was Herod the Great's enormous building program, surpassed only by those of a few Roman emperors.

But the emphasis of this work is not Herod the Great, and in moving away from the much-studied (if poorly understood) Herod to his family, Kokkinos has created a much greater dimension to the dynasty. By examining each member individually, he has created a picture of a prominent family in and out of power in Hellenistic/Roman Judaea (and beyond) for 300 years. Earlier emphasis on theological issues has tended to make a balanced view impossible (27), with much of previous study, especially for the first century AD, the province of biblical scholars. Kokkinos has gone far in recapturing the Herodians for classicists. He does not shrink from using the New Testament historically, especially Acts, but has critiqued the major secular sources carefully. This means giving particular attention to the strengths and weaknesses of Josephus, who is by far the most valuable and often the only account, since there is little in mainstream pagan authors. Central to Kokkinos' arguments are issues of chronology, and a detailed analysis of chronological points is presented in a series of appendices. In sum, the work is a remarkable production which will direct the progress of Herodian studies, and that of the Hellenistic-Roman East, for some time.

If there is any flaw in this work, it is that a book of such innovation and complexity desperately needs a better index. The lack of any sub-headings makes its use problematic, as one must wade through 80 unqualified page numbers for Herod the Great, or over 100 for Rome. And this reviewer may quibble with the author about some points, none of which significantly alters the thrust of the book. A trip of Herod the Great with Augustus to the Peloponnesos in 22-21 B.C. (225-226), for which *AJ* 15.350 is cited (which does not mention the Peloponnesos, but concerns Herod's visit to Mytilene), seems unlikely, although Augustus' presence in Sparta at this time (Dio 54.7.2) might have brought the notorious Eurykles, who later wreaked havoc at Herod's court, into contact with the king. The date of Herod's patronage of the Olympic Games is better 12 than 16 B.C., since Josephus implied (*BJ* 1.427) that Herod was on his way to Rome

when he stopped at the festival. Augustus however had left Rome for Gaul in early of July of 16 B.C. (Dio 54.19), before the time of the games (which were in late summer), so Herod could not have arrived in Rome after the games and expected to find Augustus there. The following Olympiad, when Augustus was in Italy all year, is better. It is unlikely that when Herod first headed toward Italy in 40 B.C. his ultimate goal was Brundisium (367-368), which was merely the natural port of entry to Italy for those coming from the East: Herod need not to have expected to find Antonius and Octavian there. And the disorder in Italy Josephus cited as part of the context of that trip (*AJ* 14.376) is more formulaic than specific: such instability in Italy had existed for many years, and was probably almost proverbial by this time.

At times Kokkinos seeks a precision which, although laudable, may be unobtainable given the nature of the evidence, and thus he has laid himself open to charges of going beyond the evidence, or being circular in his arguments, as with his attempt to determine the exact time of Agrippa I's birth (271), or to redate the death of Herod the Great to 5 B.C. based on the vagaries of the career of Gaius Caesar (373). Such vigor is praiseworthy, but often the arguments and setting out of evidence are more important than the conclusions, which may appear a little forced. Other speculations are unproven, but have the power of reason and sense behind them, such as Kokkinos' assertion that the Ptolemaios who wrote on Herod the Great (*FGrHist* #199) and who is only known through a single obscure reference to Herod's ethnicity, was in fact Ptolemaios of Askalon, a grammarian of the late first century AD, who would have been well placed to examine Herodian origins. But the depth of Kokkinos' scholarship is such that even when he is purely speculative, further discoveries will most probably prove him correct. It is a measure of the significance of this volume that all these comments by this reviewer are about speculative points where the evidence may be interpreted in a variety of ways and to a slightly different conclusion, none of which hinders the main argument: that to understand the Herodians one has to understand their ethnic background. Kokkinos' premises, however revolutionary, are all sound, and mark a major advance both in Herodian studies and in an understanding the complexities of the Hellenistic/Roman East and the role of its most prominent family during three centuries of culture and politics.

The Ohio State University  
4240 Campus Drive  
Lima, Ohio 45804 USA

Duane W. ROLLER

## LIBRI AD DIRECTIONEM MISSI

Tutti i libri o i fascicoli che vengono inviati alla Direzione appaiono in questo elenco. Il fatto che vi figurino non implica alcun giudizio su di essi. Recensioni più ampie dei libri verranno fatte secondo il parere del Redattore.

I libri inviati alla Direzione che non sono stati chiesti direttamente per recensione non si restituiscono in nessun caso, anche se non potranno essere recensiti. Tutti i libri insieme con gli estratti di articoli inviati alla Direzione vengono trasmessi all'Editore dell' *Elenchus of Biblica* e vi appariranno secondo il giudizio dell'Editore.

I libri vanno inviati alla «Direzione di *Biblica*, Pontificio Istituto Biblico, Via della Pilotta, 25 00187 Roma, Italia».

**Amsler**, Samuel, *Il segreto delle nostre origini*. La singolare attualità di Genesi 1-11. Traduzione di Simona Cavagna e Luciano Deodato (Piccola collana moderna – serie biblica 81). Torino, Claudiana Editrice, 1999. 92p. 12 x 20. Lit. 12.000 – Euro 6,19

**Balla**, Peter, *Challenges to New Testament Theology*. An Attempt to Justify the Enterprise (Reprint). Peabody, MA, Hendrickson Publishers, 1998. xiv-279p. 15,3 x 22,8

**Bernabé Pons**, Luis F., *El Evangelio de San Bernabé*. Un evangelio islámico español. Alicante, Universidad, 1995. 260p. 17 x 24

**Bernabé Pons**, Luis F., *El texto morisco del Evangelio de San Bernabé* (Biblioteca Chronica Nova de estudios históricos). Granada, Universidad – Instituto de Cultura Juan Gil-Albert, 1998. 312p. 14 x 21

**Best**, Robert M., *Noah's Ark and the Ziusudra Epic*. Sumerian Origin of the Flood Myth. Fort Myers, FL, Enlil Press – Winona Lake, IN, Eisenbrauns, 1999. 304p. 16 x 23,6. \$38.00

**Bieberstein**, Sabine, *Verschwiegene Jüngerinnen – vergessene Zeuginen*. Gebrochene Konzepte im Lukasevangelium (Novum Testamentum und Orbis Antiquus 38). Freiburg Schweiz, Universitätsverlag – Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998. xii-314p. 16,2 x 23,5. SFr 94 – DM 113 – ÖS 825

**Boismard**, Marie-Émile, *À l'aube du christianisme*. La naissance des dogmes (Théologies). Paris, Éditions du Cerf, 1998. 182p. 14,5 x 23,5. FF 95

**Boixareu I Vilaplana**, Rosa M., *El gènere literari dels Testaments dels Dotze Patriarques* (Col·lecció Sant Pacià 66). Barcelona, Edicions de la Facultat de Teologia de Catalunya, 1999. 356p. 15,7 x 22

**Coats**, Georges W., *Exodus 1-18* (The Forms of the Old Testament Literature IIA). Grand Rapids – Cambridge, W.B. Eerdmans, 1999. xiv-178p. 15,2 x 22,8. \$24.00 – £15.99

**Conrad**, Edgar W., *Zechariah* (Readings: A New Biblical Commentary). Sheffield, Academic Press, 1999. 220p. 16 x 24. Cloth: £35.00 – \$57.50; paper: £13.95 – \$23.75

**Cross**, Frank Moore, *From Epic to Canon*. History and Literature in



Ancient Israel. Baltimore, MD – London, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998. xvi-262p. 16,3 x 24,2. \$54.00

**De Hoop**, Raymond, *Genesis 49 in its Literary and Historical Context* (OTS 39). Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1999. xvi-695p. 16,3 x 24,5. Dfl 340 – \$200.00

**De Virgilio**, Giuseppe (a cura di), *Il deposito della fede*. Timoteo e Tito (Supplementi alla Rivista Biblica 34). Bologna, Edizioni Dehoniane, 1998. 278p. 17,2 x 24. Lit. 32.000

**Dodd**, Brian, *Paul's Paradigmatic "I"*. Personal Example as Literary Strategy (JSNTSS 177). Sheffield, Academic Press, 1999. 282p. 16 x 24. £46.00 – \$75.00

**Donfried**, Karl P. – **Richardson**, Peter (eds.), *Judaism and Christianity in First-Century Rome*. Grand Rapids, W.B. Eerdmans, 1998. xiv-327p. 15,3 x 22,8. \$24.00 – £15.99

**Du Toit**, Andrie B. (ed.), *The New Testament Milieu* (Guide to the New Testament 2). Orion Publishers, Halfway House (ZA), 1998. xxx-531p. 14 x 21,3

**Fabris**, Rinaldo – **Ska**, Jean Louis – **Cacciari**, Massimo – **Moser**, Dietz-Rudiger, *Bibbia, popoli e lingue* (Religione). Casale Monferrato (AL), Edizioni Piemme, 1998. 159p. 13 x 21. Lit. 20.000

**Farmer**, William R. (ed.), *The International Bible Commentary*. A Catholic and Ecumenical Commentary for the Twenty-First Century. Collegeville, MN, The Liturgical Press, 1998. lii-1918p. 19 x 26,2. \$89.95

**Flusser**, David, *Entdeckungen im Neuen Testament*. Band 2: *Jesus – Qumran – Urchristentum*. Herausgegeben von Martin Majer. Neukirchen-Vluyn, Neukirchener Verlag, 1999. viii-252p. 14,2 x 22. DM 78 – ÖS 569 – SFr 71,—

**Frede**, Hermann Josef, *Kirchenschriftsteller*. Verzeichnis und Sigel. Aktualisierungsheft 1999 – Compléments 1999 par Roger Gryson (Vetus Latina 1/1C). Freiburg im Breisgau, Verlag Herder, 1999. 136p. 16 x 24,5

**Gounelle**, Rémi – **Izydorczyk**, Zbigniew, *L'Évangile de Nicodème ou Les Actes faits sous Ponce Pilate (recension latine A) suivi de La lettre de Pilate à l'empereur Claude*. Introduction, traduction et notes (Apocryphes 9). Turnhout, Brepols, 1997. 271p. 12 x 19

**Graham**, M. Patrick – **Marrs**, Rick R. – **McKenzie**, Steven L. (eds.), *Worship and the Hebrew Bible*. Essays in Honor of John T. Willis (JSOTSS 284). Sheffield, Academic Press, 1999. 316p. 16 x 24. £55.00 – \$85.00

**Hayes**, John H. (ed.), *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation*. Vol. 1: A-J. Vol. 2: K-Z. Nashville, TN, Abingdon Press, 1999. Vol. 1: xl-653p.; vol. 2: xxxii-675p. 18,5 x 26,2

**Hester Amador**, J. David, *Academic Constraints in Rhetorical Criticism of the New Testament* (JSNTSS 174). Sheffield, Academic Press, 1999. 354p. 16 x 24. £55.00 – \$85.00

**Keel**, Othmar, *Goddesses and Trees, New Moon and Yahweh*. Ancient Near Eastern Art and the Hebrew Bible (JSOTSS 261). Sheffield, Academic Press, 1998. 207p. 16 x 24. £35.00 – \$57.50

**Lambrecht**, Jan, *Second Corinthians* (Sacra Pagina 8). Collegeville, MN, The Liturgical Press, 1999. xiv-250p. 16 x 23,5. \$29.95

**Latvus**, Kari, *God, Anger and Ideology*. The Anger of God in Joshua and Judges in Relation to Deuteronomy and the Priestly Writings (JSOTSS 279). Sheffield, Academic Press, 1998. 108p. 16 x 24. £37.50 – \$60.00

**Lavatori, Renzo – Sole, Luciano**, *Gesù Cristo venuto nella carne*. Il criterio dell'identità cristiana secondo la prima lettera di Giovanni (Bibbia e Spiritualità 5). Bologna, Edizioni Dehoniane, 1999. 176p. 14 x 21. Lit. 20.000

**Les Juges**. Traduction des textes grecs de la Septante, introduction et notes par Paul **Harlé**, avec la collaboration de Thérèse **Roqueplo** (La Bible d'Alexandrie 7). Paris, Éditions du Cerf, 1999. 286p. 14 x 20

**McKnight, Scot**, *A New Vision for Israel*. The Teachings of Jesus in National Context (Studying the Historical Jesus). Grand Rapids – Cambridge, W.B. Eerdmans, 1999. xiv-263p. 15,2 x 22,8. \$21.00 – £12.99

**Miler, Jean**, *Les citations d'accomplissement dans l'Évangile de Matthieu*. Quand Dieu se rend présent en toute humanité (AnBib 140). Roma, Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1999. 420p. 16,5 x 23,9

**Miller, Cynthia L.** (ed.), *The Verbless Clause in Biblical Hebrew*. Linguistic Approaches (Linguistic Studies in Ancient West Semitic 1). Winona Lake, IN, Eisenbrauns, 1999. xii-368p. 16,2 x 23,5. \$39.50

**Nieuviarts, Jacques**, *L'entrée de Jésus à Jérusalem (Mt 21,1-17)*. Messianisme et accomplissement des Écritures en Matthieu (Lectio Divina 176). Paris, Éditions du Cerf, 1999. 338p. 13,6 x 21,4. FF 190

**Nobile, Marco**, *Teologia dell'Antico Testamento* (Logos – Corso di Studi Biblici 8/1). Leumann (Torino), Editrice Elle Di Ci, 1998. 261p. 17,6 x 24,7. Lit. 30.000

**Östenstad, Gunnar**, *Patterns of Redemption in the Fourth Gospel*. An Experiment in Structural Analysis (Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity 38). Lewiston, NY, The Edwin Mellen Press, 1998. xxx-370p. 16,3 x 24,3. \$109.95 – £69.95

**Otero Lázaro, Tomás**, *Col 1,15-20 en el contexto de la carta* (Tesi Gregoriana – Serie Teologia 48). Roma, Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1999. 307p. 17 x 24. Lit. 32.000 – \$21.00

**Pereira, Ney Brasil**, *Livro da Sabedoria*. Aos governantes, sobre a justiça (Comentário bíblico – AT). Petrópolis, Editora Vozes – São Leopoldo, Editora Sinodal, 1999. 236p. 13,8 x 21

**Poppi, Angelico**, *Sinossi quadriforme dei quattro vangeli*. Greco – Italiano. Volume I: testo. Seconda edizione interamente rielaborata. Padova, Edizioni Messaggero, 1999. xii-564p. 21,7 x 28,3. Lit. 65.000

**Porter, Stanley E. – Hess, Richard S.** (eds.), *Translating the Bible*. Problems and Prospects (JSNTSS 173). Sheffield, Academic Press, 1999. 336p. 16 x 24. £50.00 – \$85.00

**Powell, Mark Allan**, *Jesus as a Figure in History*. How Modern Historians View the Man from Galilee. Louisville, KY, Westminster John Knox Press, 1998. 238p. 15,2 x 22,8. \$22.00

**Ravasi, Gianfranco**, *Leggere la Bibbia nello Spirito*. Ciclo di conferenze tenute al Centro culturale S. Fedele di Milano. Bologna, Edizioni Dehoniane, 1998. 119p. 10,18 x 18,7. Lit. 18.000

**Remaud, Michel**, *À cause des Pères. Le "Mérite des Pères" dans la tradition juive* (Collection de la Revue des Études juives 22). Paris-Louvain, Peeters, 1997. 367p. 16,1 x 24. BF 2.400

**Renkema, Johan**, *Lamentations* (Historical Commentary on the Old Testament). Leuven, Peeters, 1998. 641p. 16 x 24. BF 2.100

**Richter**, Wolfgang, unter Mitarbeit von Hans **Rechenmacher** und Christian **Riepl**, *Materialien einer althebräischen Datenbank*. Nominalformen (Arbeiten zu Text und Sprache im Alten Testament 51). St. Ottilien, Eos Verlag, 1998. 82p. 14,8 x 21

**Rosner**, Brian S., *Paul, Scripture, and Ethics*. A Study of 1 Corinthians 5-7 (Biblical Studies Library). Grand Rapids, MI, Baker Books, 1999. xii-248p. 15,3 x 23. \$19.99

**Ruether**, Rosemary R., *Introducing Redemption in Christian Feminism* (Introductions in Feminist Theology 1). Sheffield, Academic Press, 1998. 134p. 15,6 x 23,4. £12.95 – \$19.95

**Sæbø**, Magne, *On the Way to Canon*. Creative Tradition History in the Old Testament (JSOTSS 191). Sheffield, Academic Press, 1998. 401p. 16 x 24. £35.00– \$57.50

**Särkiö**, Pekka, *Exodus und Salomo*. Erwägungen zur verdeckten Salomokritik anhand von Ex 1-2; 5; 14 und 32 (Schriften der Finnischen Exegetischen Gesellschaft 71). Helsinki, Finnische Exegetische Gesellschaft – Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998. vi-185p. 14,9 x 21

**Scargi**, Giorgio (a cura di), *Gioele, Amos, Abdia* (Biblia – I libri della Bibbia interpretati dalla grande Tradizione). Bologna, Edizioni Dehoniane, 1998. 283p. 18 x 24,7. Lit. 62.000

**Schäfer**, Rolf, *Die Poesie der Weisen*. Dichotomie als Grundstruktur der Lehr- und Weisheitsgedichte in Proverbien 1-9 (WMANT 77). Neukirchen-Vluyn, Neukirchener Verlag, 1999. xiv-320p. 15 x 22,6. DM 128 – ÖS 934 – SFr 114,—

**Schams**, Christine, *Jewish Scribes in the Second Temple Period* (JSOTSS 291). Sheffield, Academic Press, 1998. 363p. 16 x 24. £55.00 – \$90.00

**Schick**, Alexander, *Il fascino di Qumran*. Giallo scientifico, diatriba fra ricercatori e autentico significato dei rotoli del Mar Morto. Traduzione di Anna Sanna e Damaris Vaneziani. Città del Vaticano, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1998. 159p. 19 x 26,5

**Schrage**, Wolfgang, *Etica del Nuovo Testamento* (Introduzione allo studio della Bibbia – Supplementi 4). Brescia, Paideia Editrice, 1999. 441p. 15,5 x 23. Lit. 79.000

**Schreiner**, Thomas R., *Romans* (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament 6). Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1998. xxii-919p. 15,8 x 23,4. \$39.99

**Schürmann**, Heinz, *Im Knechtsdienst Christi*. Beiträge zur weltpriesterlichen Existenz. Herausgegeben von Klaus Scholtissek. Paderborn, Bonifatius Druck – Buch Verlag, 1998. 419p. 14,5 x 23. DM 78 – ÖS 596 – SFr 74

**Schwarz**, Hans, *Christology*. Grand Rapids – Cambridge, W.B. Eerdmans, 1998. xii-352p. 15,2 x 22,8. \$25.00 – £16.99

**Seitz**, Christopher – **Greene-McCreight**, Kathryn (eds.), *Theological Exegesis*. Essays in Honor of Brevard S. Childs. Grand Rapids – Cambridge, UK, W.B. Eerdmans, 1999. viii-396p. 15,8 x 23,5. \$38.00 – £23.99

**Sommer**, Benjamin D., *A Prophet Reads Scripture*. Allusion in Isaiah 40-66 (Contraversions: Jews and other differences). Stanford, CA, University Press – Cambridge, University Press, 1998. xiv-355p. 16,2 x 23,6. £30.00 – \$49.50

**Sparks, Kenton L.**, *Ethnicity and Identity in Ancient Israel*. Prolegomena to the Study of Ethnic Sentiments and Their Expression in the Hebrew Bible. Winona Lake, IN, Eisenbrauns, 1998. xiv-344p. 15,7 x 23,5. \$37.50

**Swanson, Reuben (ed.)**, *New Testament Greek Manuscripts: The Acts of the Apostles*. Variant Readings Arranged in Horizontal Lines Against Codex Vaticanus. Pasadena, CA, William Carey International University Press – Sheffield, UK, Academic Press, 1998. xxviii-513p. 18 x 25,5. Retail price: \$43.95; selling price: \$14.78

**Thompson, Thomas L.**, *The Bible in History*. How Writers Create a Past. London, Jonathan Cape, 1999. xx-412p. £25.00

**Trummer, Peter – Pichler, Josef (Hrsg.)**, *Heiliges Land – beiderseits des Jordan*. Ein biblischer Reisebegleiter. Innsbruck – Wien, Tyrolia Verlag, 1998. 261p. 15 x 22,5. ÖS 390 – DM 53,50 – SFr 51,—

**Van der Merwe, Christo H.J. – Naudé, Jackie A. – Kroeze, Jan H.**, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar* (Biblical Languages: Hebrew 3). Sheffield, Academic Press, 1999. 404p. 16 x 24. Cloth: £50.00 – \$85.00; paper: £18.95 – \$29.95

**Van Wolde, Ellen**, *Racconti dell'inizio*. Genesi 1-11 e altri racconti di creazione. Traduzione italiana di Antonio Nepi (Biblioteca biblica 24). Brescia, Editrice Queriniana, 1999. 254p. 16 x 23. Lit. 25.000

**Virgili, Rosanna**, *Geremia, l'incendio e la speranza* (Quaderni di Camaldoli 13). Bologna, Edizioni Dehoniane, 1998. 123p. 14 x 21. Lit. 14.000

**Westermann, Claus**, *The Gospel of John in the Light of the Old Testament*. Translated by Siegfried S. Schatzmann. Peabody, Hendrickson Publishers, 1998. vi-106p. 13,7 x 21,5

**Wevers, John William**, *Notes on the Greek Text of Numbers* (SBL Septuagint and Cognate Studies 46). Atlanta, GA, Scholars Press, 1998. 14,4 x 22,3. xlviii-653p. \$54.95

**Wright, Tom**, *Che cosa ha veramente detto Paolo* (Piccola biblioteca teologica 48). Torino, Claudiana Editrice, 1999. 231p. 14,6 x 21. Lit. 29.000 – €14,98

**Yinger, Kent L.**, *Paul, Judaism, and Judgment According to Deeds* (SNTS Monograph Series 105). Cambridge, University Press, 1999. xiv-318p. 14,5 x 22,3. £40.00 – \$64.95

ISSN 0006-0887

---

PIETRO BOCCACCIO, Direttore Responsabile

---

Autorizz. Tribunale di Roma n. 6229 del 24-3-1958 del Reg. della Stampa



Associato all'Unione Stampa Periodica Italiana

---

Finito di stampare il 15 novembre 1999

Tip. «Don Bosco» – Via Prenestina, 468 – 00171 Roma